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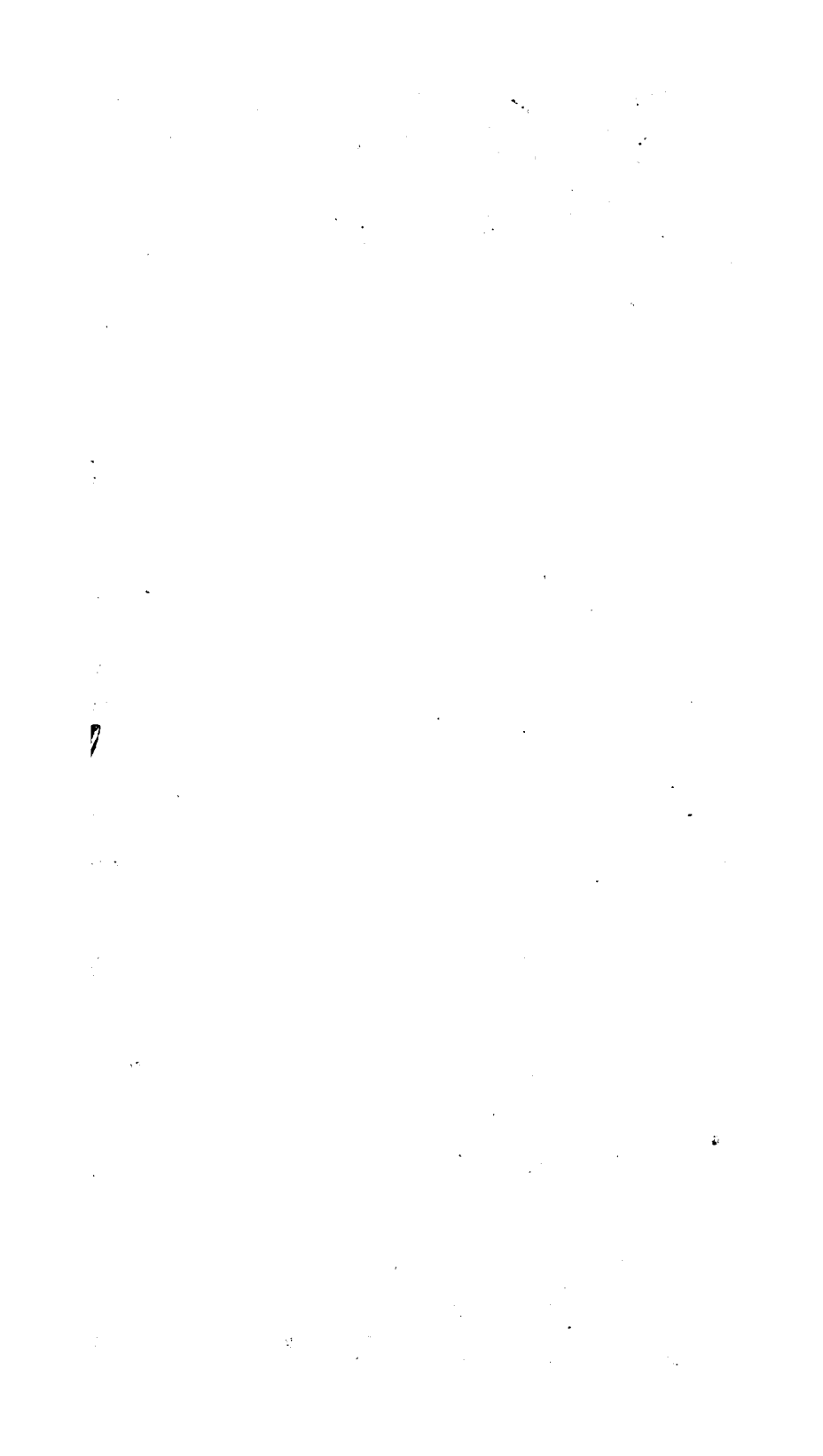


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ON
EMIGRATION,
AND THE
STATE OF THE HIGHLANDS.



Samuel Edgeworth
June 1817

OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE PRESENT STATE

OF THE

HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND,

WITH A VIEW OF THE

CAUSES AND PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES

OF

EMIGRATION.

BY THE EARL OF SELKIRK.

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The Reader is requested to correct the following Errata with the Pen.

Page 78, line 12, for *valleys* read *villages*.
117, — 16, for *do* read *does*.

APPENDIX.

xxvi, line 4, for *sedware* read *sea-ware*.



INTRODUCTION.

WHEN, on a question that has undergone much investigation and excited general attention, an individual comes forward to controvert received opinions, and to offer views which have previously passed unnoticed, every one is disposed to ask, what have been the peculiar opportunities of information upon which he presumes to contradict those who have gone before him. I trust, therefore, it will not be deemed an unbecoming egotism, that some particulars relating to myself form the subject of these preliminary pages.

Without any immediate or local connexion with the Highlands, I was led, very early in life, to take a warm interest in the fate of my countrymen in that part of the kingdom. During the course of my

academical studies, my curiosity was strongly excited by the representations I had heard of the antient state of society, and the striking peculiarity of manners still remaining among them; and, in the year 1792, I was prompted to take an extensive tour through their wild region, and to explore many of its remotest and most secluded valleys. In the course of this I ascertained several of the leading facts, on which the arguments of the following pages are grounded; in particular, that Emigration was an unavoidable result of the general state of the country, arising from causes above all control, and in itself of essential consequence to the tranquillity and permanent welfare of the kingdom.

The particular destination of the emigrants is not likely to excite much interest in those who believe that emigration may be obviated altogether. Being persuaded that no such expectation could be reasonably entertained, I bestowed some attention on details, which to other observers may have appeared nugatory. I learned, that the

Highlanders were dispersing to a variety of situations, in a foreign land, where they were lost not only to their native country, but to themselves as a separate people. Admiring many generous and manly features in their character, I could not observe without regret the rapid decline of their genuine manners, to which the circumstances of the country seemed inevitably to lead. I thought, however, that a portion of the antient spirit might be preserved among the Highlanders of the New World—that the emigrants might be brought together in some part of our own colonies, where they would be of national utility, and where no motives of general policy would militate (as they certainly may at home) against the preservation of all those peculiarities of customs and language, which they are themselves so reluctant to give up, and which are perhaps intimately connected with many of their most striking and characteristic virtues.

It was on the eve of the late war that these views occurred to me, and any active prosecution of them was precluded by the eventful period which followed; but the

object was deeply impressed on my mind, and has never been lost sight of. Far from being effaced by the lapse of time, or the occupations of maturer years, my ideas of its practicability and its importance have been confirmed by every succeeding reflection.

The emigrations from the Highlands, which had been of little amount during the continuance of hostilities, recommenced upon the return of peace, with a spirit more determined and more widely diffused than on any former occasion. All those views which I had hitherto entertained, then recurred as requiring immediate attention; and the strong impressions I had on the subject induced me to state, to some members of the then Administration, the necessity of active interference, for attracting the emigrants to our own colonies. These representations were treated with polite attention, but did not excite an interest corresponding to my own ideas of the importance of the object. Inasmuch, however, as it could be promoted by the disposal of waste lands of the Crown, I was informed that every reasonable encourage-

ment might be expected. Seeing no probability of my views being effectually adopted by Government, and reluctant to abandon the object altogether, I was led to consider how far, under the encouragement held out, I could, as an individual, follow it up on a more limited scale, to the effect at least of establishing the practicability of my suggestion. Having, therefore, received the assurance of a grant of land on liberal terms, such as promised an adequate return for the unavoidable expenses of the undertaking, I resolved to try the experiment, and, at my own risk, to engage some of the emigrants, who were preparing to go to the United States, to change their destination, and embark for our own colonies.

It is unnecessary to detail the transactions to which this led, and the various obstructions I met with in the Highlands, from persons whose jealousy had been roused by my attempt. When the preparations for my expedition were pretty far advanced, I learned that in consequence of some calumnious reports, Government were disposed to look less favourably than at first on my undertaking. To

remove the grounds of these misapprehensions, in February 1803, I stated to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, (in the concise form to which the bounds of a Letter restricted me,) the principal outlines of the following arguments; and I had the satisfaction to learn that this representation had removed the doubts of the Noble Lord to whom it was addressed.

I was given to understand, however, that it would be more satisfactory to Government, if the people I had engaged were settled in a maritime situation, instead of that I had at first in contemplation. For reasons, which I may perhaps have occasion hereafter to lay before the public, I was by no means satisfied that this suggestion was founded in just views of national policy. Nevertheless I thought it my duty under all the circumstances of the case, to acquiesce, and determined on making my settlement in Prince Edward's Island, in the Gulph of St. Lawrence.

From various considerations I found that, to give the experiment a fair prospect of suc-

cess, my own presence with the colonists was indispensable. It was indeed with some reluctance that I ultimately yielded to this; for, before I sailed, the unexpected renewal of hostilities had taken place. The business was then too far advanced to admit of any change of plan; and it was with the most anxious feelings that I found myself under the necessity of quitting the kingdom at so critical a moment. In other respects I have had no reason to regret my absence, as it has not only led me to sources of information, to which few have access; but I trust that my occupation in the mean time has not been wholly useless to my country.

I find, that my own views in this undertaking have been as much misrepresented, as the subject in general has been misunderstood. But I enter with confidence on the task of correcting the mistakes that have been disseminated; trusting that a simple statement of facts will be not less convincing to the public at large, than it has already been to an official character.

My first intention indeed was to have given to the world the very Letter, I have above alluded to, with a few additional illustrations ; but I could not avoid expanding my observations more than was consistent with such a plan, in order to render them intelligible to those who are not well acquainted with the local circumstances of Scotland. I have therefore cast the whole anew into its present form ; and, notwithstanding the bulk to which it has grown, I cannot flatter myself that the subject is exhausted. If time had permitted, some valuable additional documents might have been collected. Anxious, however, that the misrepresentations, which have been circulated under the sanction of respectable names, should no longer remain uncontradicted, I venture to submit these remarks, in their present imperfect state, to the judgment of the public, and solicit that indulgence, to which, perhaps, I have some claim from the importance of the subject, and the unavoidable haste of this publication.

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE PRESENT STATE
OF THE
HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND, &c.

- I. *Independence of the Highland Chieftains in former times. Internal state of the country resulting from that circumstance.*

THE state of commercial refinement and regular government, to which we are accustomed in England, has been so long established, that it requires some effort of imagination, to form a distinct idea of the situation of things under the feudal system. We must look back to a distant period of time, the manners and customs of which have gradually disappeared, with the causes which gave rise to them, and have left few traces of their existence. This has also been the case, to a great degree, in the Low Coun-



try of Scotland ; but the progress of society in the Highlands has been very different. It must not be forgotten, that little more than half a century has passed, since that part of the kingdom was in a state similar to that of England before the Norman conquest. When we look back to the condition of the Highlands before the year 1745, the differences which still exist between that and the other parts of the kingdom are easily accounted for. There is much more reason to be surprised at the progress that has been made by the inhabitants in these sixty years, than that they should not have accomplished to its full extent the change, which in other parts has been the work of many centuries. The feudal system has been abolished ; but the customs that arose out of it are not forgotten. An act of parliament, supported by a military force, could destroy the one ; time only can eradicate the other : and in every peculiarity of the Highlanders, we may trace the remnants of this former state of the country, or the effects of its rapid change.

Though the conquests of Cromwell, and the issue of the rebellion in 1715, gave a check to the independence of the Highland chieftains, yet it is well known that, till after the year 1745, it was never completely overthrown. Before that period, the authority of law was too feeble to afford protection. The obstructions to the execution of any legal warrant were such, that it was only for objects of great public concern that an extraordinary effort was sometimes made to overcome them. In any ordinary case of private injury, an individual could have little expectation of redress, unless he could avenge his own cause ; and the only hope of safety from any attack was in meeting force by force.

In this state of things, every person above the common rank depended for his safety and his consequence on the number and attachment of his servants and dependants : without people ready to defend him, he could not expect to sleep in safety, to preserve his house from pillage, or his family from mur-



der ; he must have submitted to the insolence of every neighbouring robber, unless he had maintained a numerous train of followers to go with him into the field, and to fight his battles. To this essential object, every inferior consideration was sacrificed ; and the principal advantage of landed property consisted in the means it afforded to the proprietor of multiplying his dependants. By allowing his tenants to possess their farms at low rents, he secured their services whenever required, and, by the power of removing any one who was refractory, maintained over them the authority of a monarch. The sacrifice of pecuniary interest was of very inferior importance, and was not a matter of choice ; for any proprietor, who should have acted on contrary principles, losing the attachment of his people, would have been left a prey to the violence of his neighbours.

The Highland gentlemen appear to have been so anxious on this subject, that they never ventured to raise their rents, however much

the circumstances of any case might make it reasonable: the tenant in fact paid his rent not so much in money as in military services; and this explains the extraordinary difference between the apparent value of land in the Highlands, in former times, and at present. The small rentals of the estates forfeited by the rebels of 1745 have often been remarked with surprise, and have been contrasted with the great value of the same lands at present; but were the rent of these estates at their utmost actual value to be all laid out in employing labourers, at the rates now current in the north of Scotland, the number of men to whom they would furnish wages and maintenance would not be very different from that of the *clans* who came out from them in the rebellion*.

The value of landed property was, in these times, to be reckoned, not by the rent it produced, but by the men whom it could send into the field. It is mentioned indeed of one of the chieftains, that being questioned by a

* See Appendix [A.]

stranger as to the rent of his estate, he answered, that it could raise 500 men.

Under these circumstances, it was natural that every proprietor should wish to reduce his farms into as small portions as possible: and this inclination was fully seconded by the disposition of the people. The state of the country left a father no other means of providing for a numerous family, than by dividing his farm among them; and where two families could be placed on the land that was previously occupied by one, the proprietor acquired a new tenant, and a new soldier. From the operation of these principles, the land seems, in a great majority of cases, to have been divided into possessions barely sufficient for a scanty subsistence to the occupiers.

It was indeed usual for the head of a clan, possessing extensive territories, occasionally to grant more considerable farms to the younger branches of his family; but this circumstance had little effect on the general

mode of agricultural management. The *tacksmen* (as the holders of such large farms were termed) were considered nearly in the same light as proprietors, and acted on the same principles. They were the officers who, under the chief, commanded in the military expeditions of the clan. This was their employment; and neither their own dispositions, nor the situation of the country, inclined them to engage in the drudgery of agriculture, any further than to supply the necessaries of life for their own families. A part of their land was usually sufficient for this purpose; and the remainder was let off, in small portions, to cotters, who differed but little from the small occupiers who held their lands immediately from the chief, excepting that, in lieu of rent, they were bound to a certain amount of labour for the advantage of their immediate superior. The more of these people any gentleman could collect around his habitation, with the greater facility could he carry on the work of his own farm,—the greater too was his personal safety. Besides this, the tacksmen, holding their lands from

the chief at a mere quit-rent, were naturally solicitous to merit his favour, by the number of their immediate dependants whom they could bring to join his standard; and they had in fact no other means of employing to advantage the superfluity of their land, than by joining in the general system of the country, and multiplying the ultimate occupiers of the land.

These circumstances produced a state of manners, from which it is easy still to trace the most striking peculiarities of the Highlanders. The greatest part of the country was fit only for pasturage, and the small portions of arable land which fell to the share of any family, could occupy but little of their time. On two or three occasions in the course of the year, the labours of the field required a momentary exertion, to prepare the soil, or to secure the crop: but no regular and continued industry was requisite for providing the simple necessities of life, to which their forefathers had been accustomed, and beyond which their ambition did not extend. The periods of labour were

short ; and they could devote the intermediate time to indolence, or to amusement, unless when their assistance was required for the defence of their chief and of their families, or for attacking some neighbouring clan. Prowess on these occasions was the most valuable quality they could possess, and that on which their pride was founded ; warlike achievements engrossed their thoughts ; and the amusements of their leisure hours generally consisted of active exercises, or displays of strength and agility, calculated to enhance their estimation as warriors.

This style of life, favourable as it was to the acquisition of all those qualities of mind and body which are requisite to form a good soldier, was no less adverse to habits of industry. If, indeed, the natural disposition of the Highlanders to industry had been ever so great, their situation would have allowed it but little scope. Their lands afforded few objects of commerce : the only article of which they ever had any considerable superfluity was cattle ; and, from the

turbulent state of the country, these could not be brought to market without the utmost difficulty. The desire of accumulating was checked by the insecurity of property: nor indeed are those who acquire it by the sword much in the habit of hoarding with care; what may next day be replaced by the plunder of an enemy, they are disposed to lavish with careless profusion. Thus among the antient Highlanders, the same men, who made a glory of pillage and rapine, carried the sentiments of hospitality and generosity to a romantic excess.

The meanest of the Highlanders was impressed with these sentiments; but, while he reckoned it disgraceful to shut his door against the stranger, or to withhold from him any thing which his house contained, he considered it as equally unpardonable, if he was refused, by another, any thing of which he was in want. From the chieftains in particular, the most unbounded generosity was expected; and the necessity, which they were under, of conciliating the attachment of their people, led them to follow the same

conduct, whatever might be their natural disposition.

The authority of the chief, however great, was not of that absolute kind which has sometimes been imagined, and could not be maintained without an unremitted attention to all the arts of popularity. Condescending manners were necessary in every individual, of whatever rank; the meanest expected to be treated as a gentleman, and almost as an equal. Nor was this all. The intimate connexion of the chief with his people, their daily intercourse, the daily dependance they had on each other for immediate safety, the dangers which they shared, were all naturally calculated to produce a great degree of mutual sympathy and affection. If there were any of the higher ranks who did not really feel such sentiments, prudence prevented them from allowing this to appear; and the devoted attachment of their followers is described in terms of astonishment by cotemporary writers.

Yet this attachment was an effect easily

deducible from the general principles of human nature. Among the poor in civilized countries, there is, perhaps, no circumstance more severely felt, than the neglect they meet with from persons of superior rank, and which appears to stigmatize them, as of an inferior species : when any one attends to their distresses, they are often more soothed by the concern which they perceive they excite, than by any direct advantage that may result. When a person of rank treats his inferiors with cordiality, and shows an interest in their welfare, it is seldom that, in any country, this behaviour is not repaid by gratitude and affection. This was particularly to be expected among the Highlanders, a people naturally of acute feelings, habituated to sentiments of a romantic and poetical cast: in them the condescending manners and kindness of their chiefs, excited an attachment bordering on enthusiasm*.

* See Appendix [B.]

II. *Change in the policy of the Highland proprietors subsequent to the Rebellion in 1745.*

THE change which this state of society underwent after the rebellion in 1745, was great and sudden. The final issue of that contest annihilated the independance of the chieftains; and the vigorous measures by which the victory of Culloden was followed, gave to regular government an authority which it had never before possessed in that part of the kingdom. The country was disarmed, and a sufficient force stationed in it to prevent any great and daring violation of the law.

The chiefs now ceased to be petty monarchs. The services of their followers were no longer requisite for defence, and could no longer be made use of for the plunder of a defenceless neighbour. They were reduced to the situation of any other proprietors: but they were not long in discovering, that to subsist a numerous train of dependants was not the only way in which

their estates could be rendered of value ; that the rents they received were far below those given for lands of equal quality in other parts of the kingdom.

For a few years after the power of the chieftains was broken, the influence of old habits seems to have prevailed, and it was some time before any great change took place ; but, by degrees, the proprietors began to exact a rise of rent. Though the first demands of this kind were extremely moderate, the rents being still far below the real value of the lands, yet the circumstance was so unprecedented, that great dissatisfaction ensued ; and the removal of some of the tenants, who refused to comply, excited still more indignation. Accustomed to transmit their possessions from father to son, as if they had been their property, the people seem to have thought, that as long as they paid the old and accustomed rent, and performed the usual services, their possessions were their own by legal right.

The discontents which arose from these

causes, were for a time but partial; for the progress of raising rents was slow. The gentlemen who had been educated amidst the habits of the feudal times, could not at once relinquish all the sentiments of their youth. The attachment of their people was of so flattering a nature, that it was often preferred to pecuniary advantages; and little alteration seems to have been made, till the generation of old proprietors was extinct. Gradually, however, men educated under different circumstances came forward, and feeling more remotely the influence of antient connexions with their dependants, were not inclined to sacrifice for a shadow the substantial advantage of a productive property. The more necessitous, or the less generous, set the example; and one gradually followed another, till at length all scruple seems to be removed, and the proprietors in the Highlands have no more hesitation than in any other part of the kingdom, in turning their estates to the best advantage.

There are still, indeed, a few chieftains who retain so much of the antient feudal no-



tions, as to be unwilling to dispossess the old adherents of their families ; and, from a tenderness towards them, submit to considerable loss. There are many others who, from vanity, are desirous of counting a numerous tenantry, and would willingly preserve the population of their estates, if it could be reconciled to their pecuniary interest. These motives, though now wearing fast away, have however had great effect till of late; so that, notwithstanding the length of time that has elapsed since the year 1745, a very considerable proportion of the Highlands remains under circumstances directly arising out of the feudal state, or is at this moment in the crisis of change. But the causes which have hitherto retarded the change are so much enfeebled, that they cannot long continue to have a perceptible effect ; and, as an unavoidable consequence, the Highlands in general must soon fall into that state which is most conducive to the pecuniary interest of its individual proprietors.

III. *Consequences of this change on population, through the prevalence of pasturage, sheep-farming, and engrossing of farms.*

IN one very important circumstance, the antient state of the Highlands differed remarkably from the rest of the kingdom,—every spot was occupied by nearly as many families as the produce of the land could subsist.

In other parts, and indeed in every civilized country where landed estates are on a large scale, we find no more people upon a farm than are reckoned necessary for carrying on the work that must be done upon it. This is the natural result of the operation of private interest. The proprietor lets his land to the tenant who will give him the highest rent for it; and the tenant manages it in the manner that he expects will produce him the most profit. For this purpose, he must raise as much produce, but with as little expense, as possible: to avoid expense, he must employ no unnecessary

hands ; must feed no superfluous mouths. The less of the produce is consumed upon the farm, the more he can carry to market.

From these causes, the population in all those parts of the kingdom which are merely agricultural, is reduced much below the proportion of people which the country could feed ; while particular spots that are favourable for manufactures have accumulated a population greatly exceeding what the produce of the immediate vicinity could maintain. There the superabundant produce of the agricultural districts finds a market ; there any superabundant population may expect to find employment.

Where there is no employment but what arises directly from the cultivation of the land, the country is more or less peopled according to the mode of cultivation. A highly refined agriculture, that approaches to gardening, will employ a considerable population, though not equal to that of a manufacturing district. In the ordinary style of agricultural management, less labour

being bestowed on the land, fewer people will be required, and fewer will find a maintenance. This will be still more the case where a great proportion of the land is in grass; and even in countries entirely devoted to pasture, a difference will be observed; as a dairy farm will require more hands than the same land employed for mere grazing.

When we inquire therefore what population may be maintained in any district, we have not merely to ask what the country could produce, or how many inhabitants that produce could maintain; the essential point is, to know what employment it can afford, and under what mode of management the land will be most profitable to the occupier. To examine the Highlands of Scotland by this test, let us consider what are the other parts of the kingdom to which it bears most resemblance. If in any of the mountainous districts of England, we find a considerable population collected in one spot, it is where a number of hands are required for working mines, or where



the abundance of coal has led to the establishment of manufactures. In the Highlands there are few mines, and these of little consequence: the country is entirely destitute of coals; and though the inhabitants have an opportunity of supplying themselves with peat or turf from the mosses, yet this is by a process so expensive and precarious in a rainy climate, that this fuel is by no means a complete substitute for coals, and is of very inferior value. The Highlands are therefore on a par with the mountains of the South of Scotland, and those on the borders of the two kingdoms, with a great part of Cumberland and Westmoreland, of North Wales, and some other mountainous districts in England:—in all of these, the soil and climate forbid the extension of tillage, while the scarcity of fuel has discouraged manufacturing industry.

In such mountainous regions, the most profitable employment of land is universally found to be in rearing young cattle and sheep, which, at a proper age, are bought by farmers in more fertile countries,

and fattened for the butcher. Few of these mountains are entirely destitute of spots in which cultivation might be practicable ; but it is found more advantageous to keep them in grass, as the numerous flocks which a range of mountains can feed in summer, require some better pasture in sheltered situations for a retreat in winter. For these reasons, judicious farmers attempt little cultivation, except in so far as it can be rendered subservient to the accommodation of their flocks; and those who have tried more have been obliged to acknowledge, that the expense of labour, combined with the loss of their winter pastures, has overbalanced any profit arising from their crops.

These reasons have still more force in the Highlands, where the climate is more adverse to the production of grain, and renders a reserve of winter pastures still more indispensable. From the prevalence therefore of the same circumstances, it must be expected that the lands will fall into the same general style of management ; and that in the Highlands, as in the Cheviots or in Tweeddale, a few

shepherds, with their dogs, will be found sufficient for all the profitable work of an extensive range of land.



Ever since the introduction of sheep-farming into the Highlands, there has been a very unequal struggle between the former possessors of the lands, and the graziers. It would be difficult, perhaps, to quote an instance where the old tenantry have been able to offer a rent fully equal to that which their competitors would have given. In many instances, indeed, the fear of such competition has induced them to stretch their utmost nerve, and to make offers, which left from the produce of the land a bare subsistence for themselves. The indulgence of the landlords has often induced them to prefer these offers, when they could certainly have procured higher; and in these cases, the tenants have, perhaps, found their situation better than they had just reason to expect. The great and continual rise that has taken place in the value of every species of produce, and of none more than grazing cattle, has enabled them to pay their rent

with tolerable ease, and even to accumulate some savings, though in no proportion to the profits of the sheep-farmers, during the same period.

That this new system, however, is adapted to the natural circumstances of the Highlands, is sufficiently proved by its rapid and continual progress; nor can it be doubted that, from the same causes, it must ultimately prevail throughout all the mountainous parts.

On the first introduction of sheep-farming, it was confined to a few adventurous individuals, who being accustomed to it in the South of Scotland, had penetration to observe the vast field which was open to them, and firmness to persevere, notwithstanding the multiplied obstacles which opposed them. Having a great extent of country in their choice, they selected only such farms as were peculiarly adapted to their purpose, and such as they could bargain for at a rent extremely low in proportion to their real value. During all this period, therefore, the old oc-

cupiers had to contend with a competition, partial, and comparatively feeble. The case is now altered, and the graziers are so multiplied as to enter into competition with one another, and to give a rent as fully proportionate to the value of the land as in the rest of the kingdom.

The first sheep-farmers, like all who introduce new and successful modes of agriculture, reaped great profits, extended their capital, and have naturally been induced to employ it all in the same manner. Their success has also attracted others from the South of Scotland. The more sagacious of the inhabitants of the country itself saw the benefits they might derive from a similar mode of management. The small proprietors of land were among the first to imitate it; and some of them have taken the whole, or the greater part of their estates into their own possession. Many of the tacksmen have also discarded their superfluous cotters and subtenants, and imitate the active industry of the strangers.

The success that has hitherto invariably attended the practice, has been an inducement to all those in the Highlands, who can command any considerable capital, to engage in the same business ; and the remarkable rise that has taken place in the value of produce within the last few years, has led them to offer rents, which are considered by the best judges as the utmost, if not beyond what the average rate of prices will enable the farmer to pay. Hence the competition with which the old occupiers have to contend, has risen to a pitch which they cannot possibly resist ; and the conclusion is inevitable, that, as fast as the current leases expire, the whole or nearly the whole of this body of men will be dispossessed.

The cotters are scarcely more likely to hold their place ; because, though a few may be requisite, yet the number usually employed on any farm under the old system, was incomparably greater than a grazier has occasion for. The rents that are now to be paid, will not allow the occupier to submit to any unnecessary expense: the families to be maintained on the ground must, for his own

interest, be reduced to the small number who are sufficient for the tending of his flocks.

The tract of country known by the general name of Highlands, is not every where mountainous; and there are situations where, in all probability, sheep-farming will not prevail. In some parts the country consists of low hills, more adapted for pasturing black cattle than sheep; in others, there is a great proportion of arable land; but the climate is generally a discouragement to tillage, even where the soil and situation oppose no obstacles.—The Western Coast and Isles are subject to such excessive rains, that a crop of grain can scarcely be secured without damage, or at least not without great expense, difficulty, and uncertainty. Under these circumstances, the farmer will certainly find it for his advantage to keep the greatest part of his arable land in pasture: and, though the tending of cattle may require rather more labour than that of sheep, a grazing of any kind, when managed with œconomy, can afford employment to very few people in comparison with the numbers

hitherto maintained under the old system of the Highlands.

The same general principle is applicable even to the districts where agriculture can be carried on to advantage: in no part will cultivation require all the people whom the produce of the land can support. Where farms are very small, the proprietors will, in every situation, find it for their interest to throw several into the hands of one man. The occupier of a minute portion of land, who, without any other source of profit, can raise little more produce than enough for his own consumption, has no means of paying an adequate rent. One man constantly employed might accomplish all the work of cultivating several of these small possessions. When they are thrown together, the farmer is enabled, merely by diminishing the number of superfluous mouths, to send a part of the produce to market; and from the same land, without any addition to its fertility, to afford a better rent to the landlord*.

* See Appendix [C.]

The further enlargement of farms throws them into the hands of men of education and efficient capital, who, by following improved modes of cultivation, increase the productiveness of the soil : thus, according to the observation of Dr. Adam Smith, “ the diminution of cottagers, and other small occupiers of land, has in every part of Europe been the immediate forerunner of improvement and better cultivation.” This the Highland proprietors have already begun to experience; and a tendency towards the accumulation of farms, is very observable in the agricultural districts, as well as in those devoted to pasturage.

Hence a number of small occupiers of land must be dispossessed. Where large farms are already established, many of the people, who were thought necessary in the feudal times, and have since been suffered to remain on the land, will, under any system of cultivation, be found superfluous as workmen, and dismissed. All of these have been hitherto enabled to live by possessing land at a rent below its value : directly or indirectly they are a burthen on the proprietors ;

and unless some new and profitable employment can be devised for them, they must continue to be a burthen as long as they remain in the country.

To this the proprietors certainly will not long submit; and therefore a great part of the present inhabitants of the Highlands must in one way or another seek for means of livelihood totally different from those on which they have hitherto depended.

Though there has been a continual progress towards this state of things, it has never till now taken place to its full extent. The new modes of management have reached their full maturity in but a small proportion of the Highlands. From those parts where they are of more recent introduction, emigrations have taken place on former occasions, but not to such an extent, as to produce a sensible diminution of the inhabitants. Thus the change of system, has yet to produce its entire and unimpaired effect in a country still teeming with the superabundant population accumulated by the genius of the feudal times.

IV. *Situation and circumstances of the old tenantry:
choice of resources when dispossessed of their farms:
Emigration preferred; for what reasons; limited in
extent.*

THIS great change in the system of management throughout the Highlands branches into various and complicated effects. In order to give a clear view of its unavoidable consequences, it will be proper first to enter into some details as to the situation and mode of life of the people, such as we actually find them, where the old system still remains. From this it will be easy to deduce the immediate effects which the change must produce on their circumstances; and it will thus appear that emigration is the line of conduct which the occasion leads them most naturally to pursue. After considering this consequence, as it affects the interest of the public, the same details will enable us to appreciate how far it may be obviated or modified by legislative wisdom; and this will lead to a discussion of all the resources which have been proposed as remedies for preventing emigration.

In consequence of the extensive distribution of landed possessions arising from the feudal manners, combined with the small progress that has been made in the arts of life and division of labour, the people of the Highlands are not separated into distinct classes of farmers, labourers, and mechanics : they are all more or less engaged in agriculture. There are no markets where provisions can be purchased, so that every man must be a farmer, at least so far as to raise provisions for his own family. Whatever additional employment a man may follow, he must occupy a small spot of land ; and any one who cannot procure such a possession, cannot live in the country.

The farms occupied by the common tenantry, are hamlets or petty townships*, held by six or eight partners, sometimes by many more. The shares appear to have been originally equal ; but by the subdivision of some, and the accumula-

* Called in the Gaelic language *bailé* ; in the Low Country dialect *touns*.

tion, in other cases, of several in the same hand, it is now frequently found that one man has a third or a fourth part of a farm, while his neighbour has but a fifteenth or a twentieth part.



These farms consist, in general, of a portion of a valley, to which is annexed a tract of mountain pasture, often stretching to the distance of many miles. The habitations are collected in a little village, in the midst of the richest and best of the arable lands, which are used as *crofts* in constant tillage. The less fertile of the arable lands on the outskirts, termed *outfield*, are only occasionally cultivated, and every part of them is in its turn left in grass. The lands in tillage, are sometimes cultivated in common, but are more usually distributed among the tenants in proportion to their shares; seldom, however, in a permanent manner, but from year to year. The produce of the tillage land rarely affords a superfluity beyond the maintenance of the tenants and their families. Their riches consist of cattle, chiefly breeding cows, and

the young stock produced from them, which are maintained on the farm till of a proper age for the market; and by the sale of these the tenants are enabled to pay their rent. The number which each farm or *toun* is capable of maintaining, is ascertained by antient usage, and may be, in general, from thirty to eighty cows, besides other cattle. The total amount is divided among the occupiers according to their respective shares, no one being allowed to keep more than his regulated proportion.

The joint occupiers of such farms are termed *small tenants*, to distinguish them from the *tacksmen*, who hold entire farms, and who are in general of the rank of gentry, each of them tracing himself to some antient proprietor of the estate, who has allotted the farm as a provision for a cadet of his family.

Upon the farms of the tacksmen, are a number of subtenants or *cotters*, under which general term may be included various local denominations of *crofters*, *mailers*,

&c. &c. These people hold their possessions under various conditions: sometimes they differ from the tenants in little else than the diminutive scale of their possessions; but in general they have a greater or less amount of labour to perform as a part of their rent. Frequently they are absolute servants to their immediate superior, having the command only of a small share of their own time to cultivate the land allowed them for maintaining their families. Sometimes the tacksmen allows a portion of his own tillage field for his cotter; sometimes a small separate croft is laid off for him; and he is likewise allowed, in general, to pasture a cow, or perhaps two, along with the cattle of the farm*.

Cotters are not confined to the farms of the tacksmen—they are also intermixed with the small tenants. Two or three are generally employed on every farm, as servants of the whole partnership, for herding their cattle, or preventing the trespasses of others. There are also a few people who exercise the trades of black-smiths, weavers, taylors,

* See Appendix [D.]

shoemakers, &c. and who bargain with one or other of the tenants for a portion of his land. Sometimes persons who have been dispossessed of their own farms, and are unable to procure a share of one elsewhere, will secure a temporary residence in the country by taking *subsets* of this kind: sometimes individuals, connected by relationship with the tenants of a farm, and who have no other resource, are permitted, from mere charity, to occupy some corner of waste land, where, by raising crops of potatoes, they contrive to work out a miserable subsistence.

It may be easily conceived, that the line between these two classes, the small tenants and the cotters, is not always very accurately defined; some of the more opulent of the cotters being as well provided as the lowest of the tenants. Upon the whole, however, there is a great difference in the amount of their property, and in the views they may entertain, when, by the progress of sheep-farming, they are dispossessed of their tenements. Among the more opulent, it is not



uncommon for one man to have twelve, fifteen, or even twenty cows ; but in general the small tenant, according to his share of the farm, may have from three or four, to six or eight cows, and always with a proportionate number of young cattle. He has also horses, a few small sheep, implements of agriculture, and various household articles to dispose of; and, from the sale of all these he is enabled to embark in undertakings which cannot be thought of by the cottier, and which are not within the reach of the peasantry even in the more improved and richer parts of the kingdom.

There the labouring poor, though earning very considerable wages, are seldom possessed of much permanent property. Their daily or weekly wages are expended in the market as fast as they arise, for the immediate supply of their families. In the Highlands, there are few of the lower class who have the means of living nearly so well as an English labourer, but many who have property of much greater value. In the Agricultural Survey of the Northern

Counties, details are given of the œconomy of a farmer of about 30 acres of arable land, whose diet and habitation appear to be of the lowest kind, the total value of his buildings not exceeding 10/, and the annual consumption of provisions for his own family and three *servants* amounting to about 15/; yet his capital is estimated at 116/; and by the advance in the price of cattle since the date of that publication, it must now be considerably more*.

Of this description of people it has often happened that 30 or 40 families have been dispossessed all at once, to make way for a great sheep-farm:—and those who have attended to the preceding details will easily understand the dilemma to which every one of these people must be reduced. The country affords no means of living without a possession of land, and how is that to be procured? The farms that are not already in the hands of the graziers, are all full of inhabitants, themselves perhaps in dread of the same fate, and at any rate too crowded to make

* See Survey of the Northern Counties of Scotland, drawn up for the Board of Agriculture, page 76 to 84.

room for him. Should he, in spite of every difficulty, resolve to earn his bread as a labourer, he can expect no employment in a neighbourhood, where every spot is occupied by many more people than are necessary for its own work; and if any casual opportunity of employment occur, it is too uncertain to be depended upon. Let his industrious dispositions be ever so great, he must, in the total want of manufacturing employment in his own neighbourhood, quit his native spot; and, if he do not leave the kingdom altogether, must resort to some of those situations where the increasing demand for labour affords a prospect of employment.

When a great number are dispossessed at once, and the land is to be applied to purposes that afford little or no employment, as in a sheep-walk, the conclusion is so evident as to require no illustration: but the case is not essentially altered when these people are dismissed in a gradual and continued progress one after another. In this way, indeed, the circumstance does not excite so much attention; but the effects on the state of the country are the same:

and to the individual who is dispossessed, it makes no other difference than that he has fewer companions to share his misfortune. It is equally impossible for him to find resources in his native spot, and he is equally under the necessity of removing to a different situation.

Sheep-farming, though it is the most prominent occasion, is not the radical cause of the difficulties to which the peasantry of the Highlands are reduced: the disposition to extend farms by throwing several possessions into one, in the manner that has already been alluded to, must produce the same effect, in whatever mode the land is afterwards to be managed.

To the dispossessed tenantry, as well as to the cotters, who by the same progress of things are deprived of their situation and livelihood, two different resources present themselves. They know that in the Low Country of Scotland, and particularly in the manufacturing towns, labour will procure them good wages: they know likewise that in America the wages of labour are still

higher, and that from the moderate price of land they may expect to obtain not only the possession of a farm, but an absolute property.

Of these alternatives, every one who is acquainted with the country must admit that Emigration is by far the most likely to suit the inclination and habits of the Highlanders. It requires a great momentary effort; but holds out a speedy prospect of a situation and mode of life similar to that in which they have been educated. Accustomed to possess land, to derive from it all the comforts they enjoy, they naturally consider it as indispensable, and can form no idea of happiness without such a possession. No prospect of an accommodation of this kind can enter into the views of any one who seeks for employment as a day labourer, still less of those who resort to a manufacturing town.

The manners of a town, the practice of sedentary labour under the roof of a manufactory, present to the Highlander a most irksome contrast to his former life. The independance and irregularity to which he is accustomed, approach to that of the savage:

his activity is occasionally called forth to the utmost stretch, in conducting his boat through boisterous waves, or in traversing the wildest mountains amidst the storms of winter. But these efforts are succeeded by intervals of indolence equally extreme. He is accustomed to occasional exertions of agricultural labour, but without any habits of regular and steady industry; and he has not the least experience of sedentary employments, for which, most frequently, the prejudices of his infancy have taught him to entertain a contempt.

To a person of such habits, the business of a manufactory can have no attraction except in a case of necessity; it can never be his choice, when any resource can be found more congenial to his native habits and disposition. The occupations of an agricultural labourer, though very different, would not be so great a contrast to his former life; but the limited demand for labour leaves him little prospect of employment in this line. Both in this, and in manufacturing establishments, every desirable situation is pre-occupied by

men of much greater skill than the untutored Highlander. He has therefore little chance of finding employment but in works of the lowest drudgery.

To this it is to be added, that the situation of a mere day-labourer, is one which must appear degrading to a person who has been accustomed to consider himself as in the rank of a farmer, and has been the possessor even of a small portion of land. In America, on the contrary, he has a prospect of superior rank; of holding his land on a permanent tenure, instead of a temporary, precarious, and dependant possession. It is not to be forgotten that every motive of this nature has a peculiar degree of force on the minds of the Highland peasantry. The pride, which formerly pervaded even the lowest classes, has always been a prominent feature of their national character: and this feeling is deeply wounded by the distant behaviour they now experience from their chieftains—a mortifying contrast to the cordiality that subsisted in the feudal times.

It has sometimes been alleged, that these motives of preference have been enhanced by the ignorance of the people, and their expectation of procuring in America lands like those of Britain, fit for immediate cultivation. That such ideas may have been entertained, and even that individuals who knew better may have been unprincipled enough to circulate such falsehoods, is not impossible: but certainly there is no need of recurring to delusions of this kind, for an explanation of the universal preference of the Highlanders for America. I know, indeed, from personal communication with them, that they are aware of the laborious process that is necessary for bringing the forest lands into a productive state. But this is not sufficient to deter men of vigorous minds, when they are incited by such powerful motives to encounter the difficulty.

It is indeed very probable, that the fashion, being once set, may influence some who are under no absolute necessity of emigrating. That this cause, however, has any very extensive operation, I can see no ground for

believing. Those who represent the emigrations as arising from capricious and inadequate motives, argue from the circumstance of tenants having occasionally relinquished advantageous leases several years before their expiration, in order to go to America. This, I believe to be fact, though a very rare occurrence; but were it ever so common, it would afford no proof in favour of the argument which it is brought to support.

Do the gentlemen who urge this argument, suppose the tenantry so blind as to perceive no danger till they are overwhelmed? The fate of their friends and neighbours is a sufficient warning of that which they must sooner or later expect. It is surely with good reason they are convinced that they cannot long continue to retain the possessions they now hold; and under this conviction the simplest dictates of prudence would lead them to anticipate the evil day, if they meet any uncommonly favourable opportunity for executing the plans to which sooner or later they must have recourse.

The price of cattle has of late years been so fluctuating, and at some periods so extremely high, that opportunities have occurred for tenants to sell off their stock at two or three times their usual and average value. Those who availed themselves of this advantage have acquired so great an increase of capital, that a few remaining years of an expiring lease could be no object when put in comparison. Such instances, so far from implying capricious levity in the people, are rather a proof of the deep impression which the circumstances of the country have made on their minds, and of the deliberate foresight with which their determinations are formed.

If there were no other proof that emigration arises from radical and peculiar causes in the circumstances of the country, it might be strongly presumed from the fact, that while this spirit is so prevalent in the Highlands, it has made no impression, or a very inconsiderable and transient impression, in the adjoining Lowlands. The labourer in the South may occasionally feel the stimulus of ambition; but this affects comparatively few: the great

mass of people go on in the track to which they have been accustomed; none but those of peculiarly ardent minds can bring themselves, for the sake of a distant object, to make the exertion which emigration requires.

The Highlander who is dispossessed of his land is forced to this species of exertion: it is utterly impossible for him to go on in the path he has been accustomed to tread. Whether he emigrate to America or remove to the Low Country of Scotland, the scene is equally new to him: his habits are broken through: he must in either case form himself to an entirely new mode of life. Forced to a change, it is comparatively of little consequence whether he undertake an exertion of greater or less amount*. To move his family from the Highlands to Glasgow or Paisley, is not to be done without an effort, and, to a poor man, a very considerable effort: and if the result is that, after all, he must enter upon a mode

* See Appendix [E.]

of life to which all his habits render him averse, which all his prejudices teach him to consider as degrading, it is surely to be expected that he will be ready to carry his effort something further, in order to attain a more desirable situation.

Though the Highlanders are certainly very inferior to their Southern neighbours in the habits of regular and steady industry, yet, for a temporary effort, there are few people equal to them; none who will submit to greater hardships and privations, where there is a great object to be accomplished. Any one who resolves on braving the difficulties of an American settlement, may look forward to a situation so much superior to that of a day-labourer, and, particularly, so much more consonant to his habits and former mode of life, that no tenant, who loses his farm in the Highlands, can hesitate between these resources, unless overruling circumstances counteract his preference.

Accordingly, with a very few exceptions, we find the choice of the Highlanders has

been entirely regulated by their ability or inability to afford the expenses of their passage to America ; and among those whose poverty has forced them to go into the manufacturing towns, some of the most remarkable exertions of industry have been prompted, only by the desire of accumulating as much money as might enable them to join their friends beyond the Atlantic.



From the peculiar circumstances of the Highlands, the proportion of the peasantry whose property is sufficient to carry them to America, is much greater than in other parts of the kingdom.

The excessive division of land arising from the feudal manners, has confounded and intermixed the characters of *farmer* and *labourer* ; and, while it has reduced to a very low standard the rank of the individual farmer, has diffused the agricultural capital of the country among a great number of hands. The small tenants form a very considerable proportion of the population of the Highlands. Few, even of the lowest of this

class, are, in ordinary times, unable to pay their passage to America: in most instances they have carried with them some money to begin with in their new situations.

The cotters, on the contrary, have not, in general, had property adequate to the expense of the passage, and few of them have ever been able to emigrate. There have been instances of young unmarried men binding themselves by indenture to a number of years' service in return for their passage; but this has been very rare. From Ireland, there has been a greater proportion of these *redemptioners* (as they are called): they are generally, however, young men who go to seek their fortunes, careless, perhaps, whether they ever again meet their relations. The more social and systematic plan which the Highlanders have always followed in going to America, is inconsistent with the obligations of a redemptioner; and to men with families, this resource is wholly inapplicable. The emigrants have, therefore, been almost entirely of the class of

tenants ; while the cotters, whom the same change of agricultural system has deprived of their situation and means of livelihood, have in general removed into the manufacturing districts of the South of Scotland.



Some expectations have been entertained, that the great public works which have lately been set on foot in the North of Scotland, the Caledonian canal, and the improvement of the roads, may prevent emigration by the employment they will afford. But this is more than problematical. Their great and permanent national utility is a sufficient ground of praise for these noble undertakings, without ascribing to them effects to which they are altogether inadequate.

These works may give a temporary relief to some of the peasantry, but will not alter the essential circumstances of the country. They bring employment a little nearer to the people, and prevent the necessity of going *so many miles* to procure it: still, however, any one who does not live in the immediate vicinity must quit his pre-

sent residence to derive any advantage. In removing his family he cannot forget that the employment will only be temporary, and this reflection will strongly counteract the preference which the situation would otherwise command. No one will be disposed to form permanent arrangements on such a foundation.

Except in point of situation, the employment afforded by these public works has no advantage over that which the Highlanders have long been in the habit of seeking in the Low Country of Scotland. The small tenant who is deprived of his land has still the same question to ask himself as formerly,—whether he will remove into a different part of the country to earn his subsistence as a labourer, or go to America to obtain land:—and the motives which have hitherto determined his preference for emigration will in no respect be altered.



V. *Political effects of the Emigrations. The Highlands hitherto a nursery of Soldiers: circumstances on which this depended; no longer exist: the loss of this national advantage does not arise from Emigration.*



AMONG the effects of emigration, there is none that has been more universally lamented than the loss of that valuable supply of soldiers which the public service has hitherto derived from the Highlands. At such a moment as this, it is impossible not to feel deep regret at every circumstance which may tend to impair the military resources of the nation; and if any satisfactory means could be devised for obviating, or even for suspending, an evil of this nature, it must be considered as of the greatest importance. But how this is to be accomplished, is not to be rashly decided. This is not the only question of political economy where an apparently direct remedy, occurring on a superficial view of the subject, may prove to be calculated in no degree to prevent, perhaps to aggravate, the evil we wish to avoid.

From the details that have been given as

to the state of the Highlands, both previous to the year 1745 and subsequently, it will be observed, that all the power of the chieftains over their followers, rested on the essential basis of the low rent of their land; and on the greater or less continuance of this, the subsequent state of the country has chiefly depended. Those proprietors who continued to exact rents very inadequate to the real value of their land, maintained all their former authority over the tenantry, perhaps even a still greater; for, during the feudal times, this authority was tempered by the dependance of the gentry on the affection of their followers for personal safety. After the year 1745, the tenantry had no such return to make for the means of subsistence they derived from the indulgence of their landlord. They felt, at the same time, that he must be under frequent temptations to discontinue that indulgence, and, therefore, were still more anxious than formerly to merit his favour.

The only opportunity they had of rendering him any important obligation, was when



he undertook to raise men for the army. The zeal with which the followers of any chieftain then came forward to enlist, was prompted not only by affection and the enthusiasm of clanship, but likewise by obvious views of private interest. The tenant who, on such an occasion, should have refused to comply with the wishes of his landlord, was sensible that he could expect no further favour, and would be turned out of his farm. The more considerable the possession he held, the greater was his interest, and his obligation to exert himself. The most respectable of the tenantry would, therefore, be among the first to bring forward their sons; the landlord might, with an authority almost despotic, select from among the youth upon his estate, all who appeared most suitable for recruits. The gentry of the Highlands were, in general, too good politicians to make a wanton display of this power; and well enough acquainted with the temper of their people to know that they would come forward with more alacrity, if allowed to indulge the flattering idea that their exertions were the spontaneous

effect of attachment to the chief ; yet perhaps no man of penetration in the country ever doubted the real cause of the facility with which the Highland landlords could raise such numbers of men with such magical rapidity.

It is easy to see how superior a body of men, thus composed, must be to a regiment recruited in the ordinary manner in other parts of the kingdom. As long as the old system remained in its purity, as long as the rents in the Highlands continued nearly at their old standard, the Highland regiments maintained a very superior character. Instead of the refuse of a manufacturing town, these regiments were composed of hardy mountaineers, whose ordinary mode of life was a perfect school for the habits of a soldier. They were composed of the most respectable of the peasantry ; men, for whose fidelity and good conduct there was a solid pledge, in the families they left at home, and in the motives that induced them to enter into the service ; men who had much stronger motives of obedience to their officers than the lash can enforce ; who were

previously accustomed, from their infancy, to respect and obey the same superiors who led them into the field ; who looked on them as their protectors not less than their commanders ; men in whose minds the attachment of clanship still retained a large portion of its antient enthusiasm.



Besides this, each corps being collected from the same neighbourhood, the men were connected by the ties of friendship and of blood ; and every one saw in his companions those with whom he had to pass the rest of his life, whether in a military capacity or not. Every one was therefore more solicitous to maintain an unblemished character than he would have been among a medley of strangers, from whom he might soon be parted to meet no more. The same circumstance tended to give the soldiery a peculiar degree of that *esprit de corps* which is so powerful an engine in the hands of a judicious commander. The attachment of the Highland soldier to his regiment was not of a casual or transitory nature,—it was not a matter of indifference to him, or the result of accident, whether

he belonged to one regiment or another,—his regiment was derived from his clan, and inseparably connected with it: in the honour of his regiment he saw that of his name; and to it he transferred all those sentiments of glory which early education had connected with the achievements of his ancestors.

The well-known military character of the Highlanders may thus be naturally accounted for: but the peculiarities that have been described may all be traced to the recent feudal state of the country; and in proportion as this has been supplanted by the progress of a commercial system, the Highland regiments have approached to a similarity with the other regiments in the service. The low rent of land was the foundation of the whole difference; and, that existing no longer, there is no possibility that its consequences can long continue. When the Highland chieftain exacts the full value for his land, his people, even if he could accommodate them all, will no longer be dependants; the relation between them must be the same as between a

landlord and his tenants in any other part of the kingdom.



It is not usual in any district for a considerable proprietor to exact for his land the utmost shilling which it could possibly afford. The tenant has almost always some advantage in his bargain; and, in proportion to this advantage he will be disposed to pay a certain deference to his landlord. In many parts of England, where the lands are held by tenants at will, the rents are certainly lower in proportion to the real value than in Scotland, where leases for a term of years are generally prevalent. It is probable, therefore, that the tenantry of the Highlands, under the new system, will be even more independant than those of England; and certainly in a very different situation from that in which they felt a necessity of quitting their families and their homes, whenever they were called upon by their landlord.

A Yorkshire farmer may give his vote at an

election for the candidate whom his landlord recommends, but would be rather surprised at an order to enlist,—not less, perhaps, than he would be at a summons to attend his lord to the attack of a neighbouring castle. Such a summons, however, to his ancestors, would once have been as irresistible a command, as recently it was to the Highlander. The same change in the circumstances of the country, must produce the same consequences in the Highlands as in England. It would be as absurd now to expect every Highlander to follow his chief into the field, as to suppose that any English nobleman could, in these days, march against London with an army of his dependants, because that was done by Warwick the *King-maker*.

Independantly, therefore, of depopulation, that nursery of soldiers which has hitherto been found in the Highlands cannot continue.

If there is a possibility of retaining the present population under the change of the agricultural system, it is clear that this

must be done by introducing among the inhabitants new branches of industry, by which those who are deprived of their lands may obtain a subsistence. If manufactories should be established, so extensively as to employ all the present inhabitants, they must, of course, acquire the habits of other manufacturing districts. Like them, indeed, they will furnish a proportion of recruits; but these will be of a very different description from the recruits that have hitherto been sent from the Highlands.

Will it be argued, that there is something in the blood of the Highlanders that will render them soldiers under every circumstance of habit or education? If that be the case, they will form as good a nursery of soldiers at Glasgow or Paisley, as in their native valleys. Or does their military character arise from the local and physical circumstances of their country; and is the manufacturer of a mountainous district different from the manufacturer of a plain? Be it so—still a Highland regiment, recruited among manufacturing villages, must be

extremely different from the Highland regiments we have hitherto seen ;—they will no longer be composed of the flower of the peasantry, collected under their natural superiors.

Where men are occupied with industrious pursuits, those of steady habits will be successful in their business, and become attached to it ; none will be easily tempted to quit their home, but those who from idleness and dissipation have not succeeded in their ordinary occupations. Men of this description inlisting singly and unconnected, in any regiment they may happen to meet, under officers who are unknown to them, can be depended on no further than their obedience is enforced by the rigour of military discipline. A regiment thus composed, whether from the Highlands or any other part of the kingdom, will be in no respect different from the ordinary regiments in the service.

This change in the character and composition of the Highland regiments, is not a mere speculative probability, but has been

7 actually going on in a progressive manner, ever since the advance of rents began to be considerable. We must go back to the seven-years war to find these regiments in their original purity, formed entirely on the feudal principle, and raised in the manner that has been described. Even as early as the American war, some tendency towards a different system was to be observed*; and during the late war, it went so far, that many regiments were Highland scarcely more than in name. Some corps were indeed composed nearly in the antient manner; but there were others in which few of the men had any connexion whatever with the estates of their officers, being recruited, in the ordinary manner, in Glasgow and other manufacturing places, and consisting of any description of people, Lowlanders and Irish, as well as Highlanders.

Those gentlemen whose estates had long been occupied in large grazings, could not, in fact, raise men in any other manner. The influence of a popular character in his

* See Appendix [F.]

immediate neighbourhood, will every where have some little effect in bringing forward recruits ; and the care with which the commissions in some regiments were distributed among gentlemen resident in the same neighbourhood, gave these corps a certain degree of local connexion, which is not found in the service in general. Still, however, there was a great difference between these, and the regiments which were raised in the remoter parts of the Highlands, where the change on the state of the country was only partially accomplished, and where recruiting proceeded on the old system.

It is to be observed, that the great demand for men during the late war, and the uncommon advantages that accrued to those gentlemen who had still the means of influencing their tenantry, suspended for a time the extension of sheep-farming, and the progress of the advance of rents. Many estates which were ripe for the changes that have since been made, and which, if peace had not been interrupted, would have been let to graziers seven or eight years earlier,

remained, for a time, in the hands of the small tenants, who were not dismissed till the conclusion of the war rendered their personal services of little further use. This circumstance goes a great way in accounting, both for the suspension of emigration during the late war, and for that sudden burst which appeared immediately after peace was concluded.

The same may again take place in a certain degree, but cannot again have much effect. The tract in which the old system remains, is reduced within narrow limits; and even there, the tenantry will not be so easily influenced as formerly. They have learnt, by the experience of their neighbours, that a compliance with the desire of their landlords may protract the period of their dismissal, but cannot procure them that permanent possession they formerly expected to preserve. A few years more must, in all probability, complete the change in the agricultural system of the Highlands, and bury in oblivion every circumstance that distinguishes the Highlands, as a nursery of soldiers, from the rest of the kingdom.

The change in the composition of the Highland regiments, whatever may be its consequences hereafter, has not yet entirely altered their peculiar spirit and character. Military men are well acquainted with the effect which the established character of any regiment has in moulding the mind of the recruit; and how long a peculiarity may thereby be preserved, though perhaps originating from mere accident. The reputation acquired by the old Highland regiments, has probably had no small effect on their successors, and perhaps also on the opinion of the public.

The importance which has been ascribed to the population of the Highlands, does not, I apprehend, arise from the mere number of the recruits which they supply, but from their peculiar excellence, and the ideas entertained of their high military character. If this character can be preserved, it must be on different principles from those that have hitherto operated; and while the change in the system of the country goes on without interruption, no remedy can be expected

from compulsory measures against emigration.



In addition to all that has been said, every person, acquainted with the description of people of which the emigrants consist, must perceive, that these are not the men who, in ordinary circumstances, can be expected to enlist. Men with money in their pockets, and with families to take care of, are not those whom a *Serjeant Kite* would assail. From their personal and domestic situation, they must entertain objections against a military life, which cannot be overcome by any motive less powerful than those which influenced the feudal tenantry. There is no reason therefore to expect, that any direct obstruction to emigration, however severe, can add a single recruit to the army.

VI. *The Emigrations of the Highlanders intimately connected with the progress of National prosperity : not detrimental to Manufactures, nor Agriculture.*

EMIGRATION has also been thought prejudicial to the public interest, as depriving the country of the hands requisite for carrying on its agriculture and manufactures. How far this idea might be just if the people who went away were industrious workmen, is not the question ; but in the case of the Highlanders, the effect of emigration on the commercial prosperity of the kingdom is directly the reverse.

To give a just view of this subject, the great change that has been described in the general management of the Highlands, must be considered as one connected event. Emigration is a part of the general change : it is one result, and cannot in fair reasoning be abstracted from the other concomitant effects. If the national prosperity is essentially promoted by the causes from which emigration

necessarily ensues, this their effect cannot be considered as pernicious.

The same change in the state of the country, which we now see going on in the Highlands, took place in England under the Tudors. In the reign of Henry VII. the authority of the crown was firmly established; the power of the great barons was broken; their retainers, being found to be useless, were dismissed. In the same progressive manner the rents were then raised, by turning the lands into more profitable modes of management, and letting them in larger farms; the same odium was excited by dispossessing the small occupiers, and by the prevalence of pasturage; the very same complaints were made of the sheep having driven out the men*. No one, however, now entertains a doubt, that from the æra of this change the prosperity of England as a commercial country is to be dated: and can it be supposed that an arrangement, of which the beneficial consequences in England have been so remarkable, will have an opposite

* See Appendix [G.]

effect when extended to the Highlands of Scotland?

After all the declamation that has been excited by the depopulation of the Highlands, the fact in reality amounts to this; that the produce of the country, instead of being consumed by a set of intrepid but indolent military retainers, is applied to the support of peaceable and industrious manufacturers. Notwithstanding the marks of desolation which occasionally meet the eye of the traveller, impressing him with melancholy reflections on the change which is going on, it cannot be doubted, that the result is ultimately favourable to population, when we take into account that of the whole kingdom, balancing the diminution in one district by the increase in another.

In former times, when a great population was maintained in the midst of these mountains, their produce was almost entirely consumed on the spot. The number of cattle which at any time found their way to a distant market was inconsiderable, in propor-

tion to the value of produce sent away under the new system of grazing. This produce is an addition to the supply of the manufacturing districts; and, in proportion as it augments their means of subsistence, must tend to the increase of population. Supposing, therefore, that the produce of every farm under the new mode of management, were of the same total amount as under the old, the effect of the change would only be, to transfer the seat of population from the remote valleys of the Highlands, to the towns and valleys of the South, without any absolute difference of numbers*.

It is agreed, however, by the best authorities, that the produce is not merely changed in its kind, but augmented, by the improved management which has been introduced. No doubt can be entertained as to the augmentation of pasturage produce; but it may be questioned, whether this is not balanced by the diminution of tillage. On the other hand, the land which is still kept in tillage will certainly be much better ma-

* See Appendix [H.]

naged; and, perhaps, from a smaller number of acres the produce may be nearly as great*.

Besides this, the diminution of tillage in the Highlands will probably be followed by an increase in the Southern parts of the kingdom. It is well known, that in England a great deal of arable land is kept in grass, for rearing young cattle and sheep: but there will be the less necessity for this, when the mountains furnish a greater supply. Many of the arable pastures will then be broken up, and, in all probability, their produce will far exceed that of the fields hitherto cultivated in the Highlands, as the soil and climate are both so much better adapted for the production of grain. In this, as in many similar instances, motives of private interest appear to lead to the same general arrangements, which the most enlarged views of public advantage would dictate†.

Even if the question were limited to the Highlanders alone, it is an undeniable fact, that an increase in the productive industry

* See page 36, and Appendix [C.]

† See Appendix [I.]

of the nation is a consequence of the emigrations. The extreme indolence of these people where they are allowed to remain in their original seats under the old system, has often been remarked. That indolence, however, is not to be ascribed to inherent dispositions, but to the circumstances in which they are placed; to the want of sufficient incitements to industry, and to the habits which have naturally grown out of such a situation*. This is demonstrated by their laborious exertions when they come into the Low Country, and feel at the same time the spur of necessity and the encouragement of good wages. A stranger who had seen them in their native spots would scarcely believe them to be the same men. Though, in many branches of business, they cannot be equal to people of more practised industry; yet their labour, however unskilled, will admit of no comparison, in point of value and productive effect, with their former work, while lounging over their paternal farms.

Thus the same general circumstances which

* See Appendix [L.]

lead a part of the Highlanders to emigrate, occasion a very great increase of productive industry among those who remain. There can be no shadow of doubt that this increase is much more than equivalent to the trifling amount of work usually performed by the emigrants before any change took place. Where the old system of management is broken up, the utmost that can be supposed with any probability is, that from an estate inhabited by 100 families, 25 or perhaps 30 may have the means of emigrating: and does any one, acquainted with the Highlanders, entertain a doubt that 70 or 75 well employed labourers will perform work of more value than 100 small tenants and cotters? It would perhaps be nearer the truth to say that they will do three or four times as much.

If, by restrictive laws, those who would otherwise have emigrated should likewise be brought under the necessity of seeking employment within the kingdom, it does not by any means follow that the increase of productive industry would be

7 in proportion to the additional numbers. The laborious life for which any of these people have to exchange their former habits, is a hard and unwelcome change, forced on them only by the pressure of severe necessity. Those who have capital enough to go to America, are not under such immediate necessity as those who have no property, and will be so much the more reluctant to conform themselves to their new situation. It is they who will feel with peculiar force the idea of degradation from the change; and, in proportion as their situation was formerly above their neighbours, they will rank below them as useful labourers. Deprived of the encouraging prospect of maintaining or improving their station in life, they will continue in a state of inaction or feeble exertion, as long as the remnant of their property will allow them. This little capital, which would have enabled them in the colonies to begin as settlers, will be wasted in indolence at home; and no effectual exertion of industry can be looked for from them, till they too are reduced to beggary.

But is it possible to suppose that a policy, which must occasion so much individual hardship, would be adopted for so trifling a public object, as any advantage that can be expected from the reluctant industry of those who might be restrained from emigration?

The peasantry, whom the necessity of their circumstances has brought from the Highlands to the manufacturing towns, have been found but little capable of any of the nicer operations of manufacturing industry, and have been chiefly employed as labourers in works of mere drudgery*. Though the Legislature has at times thought fit to interfere, for the purpose of preventing our manufacturers from being deprived of their choice hands, of workmen whose peculiar skill and dexterity were considered as of essential consequence; yet there is perhaps no precedent of regulations for obviating a deficiency of porters and barrowmen, and ditchers.

If such a precedent should be found, I am

* See Appendix [K.]

confident it is not from Glasgow that any application would come for a renewal of expedients, devised at a period when the first principles of political economy were buried in darkness. These principles are too well understood among the leading merchants and manufacturers of that city, to allow them to suppose that, without giving adequate wages, they can procure the hands required for their work; nor will they entertain a doubt that good wages will attract all those they need. Any trifling advantage, that might arise from forcing a superabundant and of course temporary supply of hands, is an interest much too inconsiderable to excite, in that liberal and enlightened body of men, any of the intolerant zeal which some individuals of a different description displayed upon this question. It was from a very different quarter that the adoption of restrictive measures was urged.

If any partial interest, however, is promoted by these measures, it is not that of the Highlands, but of Glasgow and Paisley. The utmost effect that can result from the

regulations that have been adopted, or from any others of the same tendency, can only be to force a greater proportion of the people who must leave the Highlands, to settle in the seats of manufacturing industry, instead of going to America; to force the small tenants to follow the same course as the cottagers. If the restrictions were even carried as far as a total prohibition of any person leaving the kingdom, it would not prevent the depopulation of the Highlands, unless the people were also restrained from moving to a different district*.

We hear, indeed, from some gentlemen, that the spirit of emigration threatens such a complete depopulation as will not leave hands even for the necessary business of cultivation. This, however, rests upon mere conjecture, and is not supported by any one example. There is scarcely any part of the Highlands, where the new system of management has come to such full maturity, as to have left no superabundant population, and

* ——— and unless also they were empowered by act of parliament to live without food."

reduced it to the proportion absolutely requisite for the business of the country.

In some districts, the more secluded valleys, lying in the midst of high mountains, retain scarcely any inhabitants; but numbers are every where found along the larger vales, and near the arms of the sea, by which the country is so much intersected. In these situations, where fishing affords some additional resource, and where opportunities of occasional employment occur, many proprietors have laid out small separate possessions or *crofts*, and have never found any deficiency of occupiers for them. The cotters seem always to prefer a situation of this kind to any prospect they may have in the manufacturing districts; and hence there are, in almost every part of the Highlands, more of the inferior class of people than enough to carry on all the work that is to be done; a greater population than is proved by experience to be sufficient, among similar mountains in the South of Scotland*.

* See Appendix [M.]

That the population of the Highlands is still more adequate to the demand for labour than in other parts of the kingdom, there is a satisfactory proof in the customary rate of wages. In some of the Southern districts of the Highlands, where the system of sheep-farming has been longest established, where the small tenants are entirely gone, and the alarm of depopulation was felt upwards of forty years ago, wages are higher than in the rest of the Highlands, but still below the rate of the Low Country of Scotland: and still there is, from among the remaining inhabitants even of these parts, a silent but continual migration towards the great centres of manufacturing industry. This drain is, perhaps, no more than sufficient to relieve the country of the natural increase of inhabitants. Be that, however, as it may, it is evident that, if any circumstance should lead to a further diminution of numbers, such as to occasion a want of hands, the consequence would be a rise of wages, which would take away from the temptation to seek employment elsewhere, and, by rendering the situation of the labouring poor

as favourable as in other parts of the country, would retain at home their natural increase, till every deficiency should be filled up.

Thus it must appear that emigration produces no real inconvenience even to the district most immediately affected. But these arguments are, perhaps, superfluous; for, if the subject deserves the interference of the Legislature, it is no more than justice, that among the interests that are to be consulted, that of the Highland proprietors ought to be the last of all. They have no right to complain of a change which is their own work, the necessary result of the mode in which they choose to employ their property. Claiming a right to use their lands as they see fit and most for their own advantage, can they deny their tenantry an equal right to carry their capital and their labour to the best market they can find? If the result of this should prove of such extreme detriment to the public welfare, as to call for a restrictive remedy,—if necessity demand a limitation on these natural rights of the peasantry,—would not the same prin-

ciples justify, and would not equity dictate, a corresponding restriction on the proprietors in the disposal of their lands ?

If the gentlemen of the Highlands are determined at all events to preserve the population of their estates, it is unquestionably in their power ; by replacing their farms on the old footing, and relinquishing their advance of rent. If they do not choose to make this pecuniary sacrifice, they must abide by the consequences ; and it is with a bad grace they come to the Legislature for the means of obviating them.

If any one of these proprietors, while he lets his farms for the most advantageous rent he can procure, could also concentrate upon his estate a numerous population, enriched by productive industry, it would, no doubt, be much for his advantage. If he has a view to such improvements, it is incumbent on him to find the means of carrying them into effect, as it is to *his* advantage they will ultimately redound. It is his own business to provide the means of subsistence and

employment for those he wishes to retain on his estate; to render the situation advantageous and acceptable to them. If he cannot succeed in this, he has no more title to expect public assistance for keeping his dependants on his estate, than any other proprietor would have, for establishing a village, and compelling people to inhabit it, on the summit of the Cheviot mountains or of the Peak of Derby.



VII. *Means that have been proposed for preserving the population of the Highlands: improvement of waste lands; fisheries; manufactures: cannot obviate the necessity of emigration.*

THOUGH the partial interests of the Highland proprietors do not seem entitled to all the regard that has been claimed for them from the Legislature; though it is contrary to every principle of justice, that unusual and unnecessary restraints should, for their benefit, be imposed on the personal liberty of their dependants; yet every friend to his country would rejoice, if they could find means of obviating the local depopulation of their district, by the introduction of suitable branches of productive industry.

Among these, the most promising is the cultivation of waste land. Some attempts have been made in the Highlands to turn the superfluous population to this branch of industry. The success with which they have been attended is sufficient to encourage

further experiments ; and to leave no doubt that, by this means, a number of people may every where be retained, fully adequate to any supply of labourers that can be required for the accommodation of the country. The maintenance to be derived from this resource is indeed a very wretched one : poor as it is, however, there are few of the class of cotters who would not readily accept any situation where they could by this employment find a support for their families.

The plan upon which the gentry of the Highlands have proceeded in encouraging this branch of industry, does not seem calculated to draw from it all the advantage which circumstances might admit. They have in general laid out patches of a few acres of waste land, which they have granted on very short leases, seldom exceeding seven years ; leaving the occupiers to their own management, without further guidance, and with little or no pecuniary aid*. It is surprising, that under such leases, any improvements at all should be made ; and it is only,

* See Appendix [N.]

perhaps, from the low value of labour, that the poor in the Highlands are disposed to consider a bare subsistence in the mean time, as a sufficient indemnification for work of which the benefit is in so short a period to revert to the landlord. Such, however, are the circumstances of the country, that these tenures are sufficient to prompt the occupiers to considerable exertions of their own personal labour; but there are few instances where that alone is sufficient for improving waste lands. Calcareous manure is a requisite almost indispensable; and where it must be purchased from a distance, the poor occupier cannot be expected, on such a tenure, to undertake any share of the expense. If, therefore, the proprietor does not find it convenient to incur the expense himself, it is absolutely necessary that the terms of the lease should be much more encouraging.

It is not easy to judge whether these poor people could by any means be induced to sink in such improvements the little capital they may possess: but there is no probability



that they would do so without a lease of such duration as to be nearly equivalent to absolute property. The calculations which a rich and intelligent farmer would make, as to the proportion between his outlay and its return, would by no means be suitable to a case of this kind. The poor Highland cottier finds so much difficulty in accumulating a small sum of money, that it is no wonder he should be disposed to hoard it with tenacity, and be reluctant to lay it out for a profit, which a person accustomed to a liberal scale of business might think more than adequate. In proportion as he finds his labour of little value, he must value his money the more, and will not part with it without a very evident advantage indeed. On the other hand, a very long lease would certainly have bad effects. The exertions of these poor cottiers are seldom carried further than they are impelled by the necessity of providing a maintenance for their families. Whenever this becomes tolerably easy, their new and half-formed habits of industry relax; and at any rate they proceed in a trifling and unsystematic manner.

The improvements would be carried on with much more effect, if the proprietor would advance not only the pecuniary expenses which are indispensable, but make the occupier an allowance for every work he executes, of such amount, as to form (along with the first crop or two on the improved land) a fair compensation for his labour. In this way, there would be no necessity of giving him a permanent tenure, and the proprietor might carry forward the improvements with spirit and regularity, keep up the industry of the people, and render it far more effective. This, though a temporary burthen, would soon be compensated by the increased value of the land, and those who have the means could not perhaps apply their capital in a more advantageous manner. How far pecuniary difficulties may prevent the proprietors in general through the Highlands from making these advances, and how far the situation of entailed estates may be an obstacle, are questions very interesting in a review of the improvements of which the Highlands are capable, but not immediately connected with the subject of

these observations; for there is no probability that this resource can have any effect in diminishing the emigrations. It is only to the poorest of the people that it can be rendered acceptable; by the tenants, even those of the lowest order, it would be considered as too great a degradation*.



The same may, perhaps, be said of the fisheries, which seem, next to the cultivation of waste lands, the most important resource that is open to the Highlanders in their own country. The extent to which they may be carried, will probably fall far short of any expectations formed upon the romantic ideas, which some authors have given of the incredible abundance of fish. Without listening to these exaggerations, it is unquestionable that several stations are very productive, and a great extent of coast sufficiently so to afford an adequate reward for the labour of the industrious fisherman, and to employ a considerable number of people. It is also certain, that this employment is more congenial to the habits and inclinations of the

* See Appendix [O.]

people, than almost any other that can be proposed, and without any very extraordinary encouragement this branch of business may be carried as far as natural circumstances and the extent of the market will permit.

The obstacles arising from the salt-laws, &c. are illustrated in so many publications, that it is unnecessary here to dwell upon them ; but it may not be superfluous to observe, that the general change, in the management of Highland estates, is likely to remove the greatest of all impediments to the progress of the fisheries on the Western coast and Isles : I mean the connection between fishing and the cultivation of land. The opinion of practical men, as to the absolute incompatibility of these employments, is uniform* ; and experience has also proved, that a very trifling possession of land, by distracting the attention of a fisherman, will lead him to neglect opportunities of more important

* See Appendix [P.]

profits in his own business. The minute division of farms, which was the result of the feudal state, precluded entirely the separation of these employments. The natural remedy to this lies in the rise of the value of land, and its accumulation in the hands of active and intelligent farmers. When land becomes dear, some of those who cannot procure it, will be under the necessity of betaking themselves to fishing as their only employment. The success which may justly be expected to attend those who first apply to it with steady and unremitting industry, is the only bounty which will be necessary to induce others to follow their example*.

It is to be regretted that the establishments of the British Society for the Encouragement of Fisheries have not, in this respect, been conducted on just principles, and have counteracted, instead of aiding, the natural progress of the country. In the villages where those gentlemen proposed

* See Appendix [Q.]

to fix the head quarters of the Highland fisheries, they have annexed to the building lots, portions of arable and meadow land *at low rents*, with a right of common for the pasture of a cow or horse. These patches of land, though they afford but a miserable subsistence, are yet a sufficient resource for men, whose rooted habits require the stimulus of absolute necessity, to bring them to a life of regular and persevering industry. Accordingly the villages of Tobermory and Steen, on which very large sums of money have been expended, are scarcely possessed of a fishing-boat, their inhabitants are sunk in inactivity, and consist in general of the refuse of the population of the country.

The custom so universally established in the Highlands and Western Isles, that every person whatever should have some portion of land, large or small, has tended to render fishing an entirely subordinate employment, followed in an irregular manner, only as it suits the intervals of leisure from



business on shore. It is a natural consequence, that the fishing boats and apparatus are in general extremely bad ; nor is it surprising, that from these combined circumstances, an idea should prevail among the peasantry, that it is impossible by fishing alone to earn a livelihood. Instances are quoted, where the proprietors have been anxious to employ in fishing the tenants who were dispossessed of their lands ; and have with this view made liberal offers of supplying boats, nets, and every requisite material, which have been rejected under that idea. To establish fishing as a separate employment, can only perhaps be brought about in a gradual manner, by encouraging individuals to pay a greater share of attention to it, previous to their being totally deprived of land : and though this may not succeed with those who have property, there is no doubt that, among those who are too poor to have much land, many may be found who would pursue the business with activity, if they were assisted with credit for the purchase of the necessary materials, and if arrange-

ments were made for securing them as advantageous a market as possible.

It is with pleasure I learn that the practicability of this suggestion has been ascertained by experimental proof in a village on Loch Fyne, established by Mr. Maclachlan of Maclachlan. That gentleman, finding himself a number of years ago under a necessity of thinning the population on several of his farms, selected ten or twelve families of the poorest cotters, men, however, whom he knew to be capable of laborious exertion. These he fixed in a situation on the shore, where he furnished them with two substantial fishing boats of the best construction, with all their apparatus, on condition that their cost should be repaid to him from the produce of their industry. Anxiety to discharge their debt stimulated these men to exertion, and a season or two of successful fishing left them free proprietors of the boats they had been furnished with. The proprietor was sensible that, from the habits of these people, they would think it impossible to live without some land ; and that

in fact, from the want of markets for purchasing provisions, such an accommodation was to a certain degree indispensable in the present state of the country. He therefore laid out a part of a farm for them, and, to avoid disheartening them, allowed them to possess it for a year or two at an inadequate rent. By degrees, however, he raised it to its full value, so that the possessors cannot trust to the land for their support, having no means to pay their rent unless they are industrious in their fishing. Other inhabitants have likewise been brought to the village, and the original portions of land subdivided, so as to become to every individual a mere accommodation, and an object entirely subordinate. When the further progress of the country towards a commercial state leads to the establishment of markets for provisions, these people, being already brought to such a degree of advancement, may be entirely deprived of land without any fear of their being disconcerted by the change. The success of the first fishermen has been such, that they have fitted out a number of additional boats, of the best

construction, at their own charge, and several of them have accumulated considerable sums of money.

This experiment was made in one respect under favourable circumstances; as the situation, from the vicinity of the richer parts of Scotland, has the advantage of a constant and ready market for fish. In the remoter parts of the Highland coast, and Hebrides, the people can scarcely get any price for fish in small quantities; and in the establishment of a village there, it would be of essential consequence to obviate the difficulty by proper arrangements. But if, with a due attention to this point, experiments were made on the same principles in each of the capital fishing stations in the distant Hebrides, a race of people exclusively fishermen would by degrees be formed, and would spread to every part of the coast that is adapted to the purpose.

The success of a few poor people in each of these, supported in the manner that has been alluded to, would over-

come the prevailing prejudices, and encourage others to embark in the business on their own capital. It is not likely indeed that any of the middling or more opulent of the tenants could be brought to this ; nor is there any reason to be anxious on that account ; as there are certainly among the cotters a great many more people than there is any prospect of employing in the fisheries of the Western coast and Isles, though conducted in the best manner, and to the utmost extent which the established demand of the market will admit.

Manufactures are another resource, frequently pointed out as capable of affording maintenance for all the people in the Highlands who must be deprived of their lands. This idea does not appear to be well founded. Manufactures may perhaps be carried on to a small extent in the Highlands in a domestic way by the families of men engaged in other pursuits ; but a large establishment could not succeed under so many natural disadvantages of situation. In fact, though much has been said on the

subject by speculative writers, and every disposition has appeared on the part of the landholders to encourage it, no practical manufacturer has ever shown the least inclination to make the attempt*.

The mechanical improvements that have been introduced of late years, into so many branches of manufacture, leave but very few which, like the linen manufacture of Ireland, can be carried on to advantage by a scattered population. A manufactory in which machinery is much employed, is seldom so profitable on a small as on a large scale; and, on the smallest, requires a greater accumulation of people than can be found in many situations in the Highlands. There are indeed two or three villages where the population would supply hands enough for a small establishment; but other difficulties arise from the remoteness of the situation, and the infant state of the country as to every improvement in the arts.

* See Appendix [K.]

Mechanical artists of various kinds, are always at hand in the great centres of commercial industry, and their assistance must frequently be resorted to. The want of this accommodation is a great inconvenience to a manufactory in an insulated situation. An inconsiderable breakage of machinery, which in a great town might perhaps be repaired in a few hours, will there be sufficient to interrupt the whole business for a long period. To this inconvenience is to be added the want of regular and speedy conveyance for goods, and the tediousness of the posts.

All these difficulties might be obviated, were there any great advantage on the other hand, or any great profit to be the reward of success; but there is no prospect of the kind. The temporary superabundance of population and consequent low rate of wages, is the only favourable circumstance that can be named, and this is more than counterbalanced by the total want of skill, and of habits of regular industry, in the people. These could not be introduced without much assi-

duity and patience, and perhaps some loss to the manufacturer who should undertake an establishment ; and should he after all succeed in effecting this reform, it cannot be disguised that, as soon as he has rendered the situation desirable, other adventurers will follow him to it, and raise the price of labour by their competition.

All the permanent advantage arising from the establishment, would rest with the proprietors of the adjacent lands, and if the difficulties attending the attempt are to be overcome, the burthen also must rest with them. The exertions which may be made with a view to this improvement must be considered as laudable ; but the object is of no national importance, and is of a totally different nature from the other resources which have been alluded to, as fit employment for the superabundant population. By the improvement of waste land, or the extension of the fisheries, a nett and absolute addition is made to the production of national wealth, a new supply is procured of human subsis-



tence, which would otherwise be lost. But the success of a manufacturing establishment in the Highlands would have no further effect, than to fix the seat of a certain portion of industry in one part of the kingdom, instead of another. Manufacturing enterprises are limited by the extent of the market, as well as by the supply of hands. In either of these respects, a manufactory established in the Highlands, with much pains and expense, could only occupy the place of one, which would of itself have grown up in those parts of the kingdom, where the undertaking is not subject to the same natural and political disadvantages, and where the Highlanders may find the employment they are in want of.

The establishment of manufactures in the Highlands, might thus affect the migrations of those classes who now seek employment in the old established seats of industry: but to the small tenants, the same objections which occur against a manufactory in the South, would apply equally to

a similar employment in a situation a little nearer home. There is no probability therefore, that such establishments could have any effect on those who are inclined to emigrate to America.

VIII. *Emigration has no permanent effect on population. Legal restrictions useless and dangerous: discontent in the Highlands: emigration useful to the public peace.*

THE concise view that has been taken of the different resources which have been proposed for preserving the local population of the Highlands, may be sufficient to show, that not one of them is applicable to the circumstances of those who are most inclined to emigration. It must also be observed that these resources are still to be found only in the regions of theory; and to their practical application there are impediments which cannot be removed without much patience and exertion. The country is by no means arrived, and will require a considerable time before it can arrive, at such a state, that every man who is industriously disposed, may have opportunities of employment adapted to his situation.

Independantly of any question as to constitutional propriety, nothing seems more obvious, than the necessity of bringing re-

sources of this kind to full maturity within the country, before any legal interference is hazarded for preventing the people from seeking them elsewhere. To act upon contrary principles would be productive of the utmost misery, and of a real, instead of an apparent depopulation. Let us suppose an extreme case; that, while the change of the agricultural system is allowed to go on, and no adequate means of support are provided for the superabundant population, invincible obstacles should be contrived to restrain the people from removing to a different situation. The infallible consequence must be, that the lower classes would be reduced to the utmost distress: the difficulty of procuring either land or employment would amount almost to an impossibility; and even if the people should escape absolute famine, few would be inclined in such circumstances to undertake the burthen of rearing a family, or would venture on marriage. The misery of the people would thus in time produce the effect which emigration is now working, and reduce their numbers to a due proportion with the employment that can be given

them. On the other hand, if a number of people, who are under no absolute necessity, should emigrate, those who remain behind will find it so much easier to procure employment and subsistence, that marriages will more readily take place, and the natural increase of population will proceed with more rapidity, till every blank is filled up.



On this subject it will be sufficient to refer to the valuable work of Mr. Malthus on the Principle of Population, in which these arguments are traced to such uncontrovertible general principles, and with such force of illustration, as to put scepticism at defiance. I may be allowed, however, to state one or two facts, which, while they add to the mass of concurring proofs which Mr. Malthus has quoted, may serve to show how immediately his principles are applicable to the particular case of the Highlands.

By the returns made to Dr. Webster, in the year 1755, the seven parishes of the Isle of Sky contained 11,252 inhabitants. By those to Sir John Sinclair, between 1791

and 1794, 14,470 *. Some time after Dr. Webster's enumeration, the emigrations commenced, and, since the year 1770, have been frequent and of great amount. A gentleman of ability and observation, whose employment in the island gave him the best opportunities of information, estimates the total number who emigrated, between 1772 and 1791, at 4000. The number who, during the same period, went to the Low Country of Scotland, going in a more gradual manner, and exciting less notice, could not be so well ascertained; but from concurring circumstances he considers 8000 as the least at which they can possibly be reckoned.

Notwithstanding this drain, it appears that the natural tendency of population to multiply has more than filled up the blank; and if, to the numbers which have left the island, we add the natural increase which has probably taken place among them also, in their new situation, we cannot doubt that there are now living a number of peo-

* See Statistical Account of Scotland. General Table of Population, Vol. xx.

ple descended from those who inhabited the island at the period of Dr. Webster's enumeration, at least double of its actual population. Now, let it be supposed, for the sake of argument, that the whole of these could again be collected within the island: will the wildest declaimer against emigration pretend to say, that it could afford support or employment to them all? When its actual numbers are an oppressive burthen, what would be the case if such an addition were made? Can it possibly be believed, that, if the emigrations had not taken place, the same natural increase would have gone on? And does not this instance demonstrate, that to restrain emigration would only be to restrain the principle of increasing population?

Another instance of a similar fact is quoted by Mr. Irvine*. It was communicated, he says, by a gentleman of unquestionable veracity, who relates, from his personal knowledge, that 'in 1790, a place on the west coast ' contained 1900 inhabitants, of whom 500

* See Irvine's Inquiry into the Causes and Effects of Emigration, &c. p. 9.

* emigrated the same year to America. In
 * 1801, a census was taken, and the same
 * spot contained 1967, though it had fur-
 * nished 87 men for the army and navy,
 * and not a single stranger settled in it.'

There is, perhaps, no part of the High-lands where the people have so strong a spirit of emigration, and where the gentry are so much in dread of its effects, as in that part of the Hebrides called the Long Island, particularly in North and South Uist, and Barra. From these islands there have been very considerable emigrations at different times ; some of which, though by no means all, are enumerated in the statistical accounts. Of the total number of the people who have left these islands, I cannot speak with precision ; but from various circumstances they appear to have been as great in proportion to the whole population, as in other parts of the Highlands. Nevertheless these parishes, which, in 1755, contained 5268 people, were found to have 8308 at the date of Sir John Sinclair's statistical survey. The particulars that may be collected from

that publication, as to the crowded state of population, and the poverty of the people in consequence of it, make it apparent that the multiplication of the inhabitants has gone to an inconvenient and excessive degree.



These facts might be corroborated by many other examples; but these are perhaps sufficient to leave no doubt of the principle, that emigration does not imply the necessity of a permanent diminution of population, and is not even inconsistent with an increase, wherever there are adequate resources for its employment and support.

This principle, important in itself, leads to a conclusion of still more importance—the emigrations from the Highlands, without ultimately affecting the *numbers* of the people, operate a very desirable change in their *character* and composition.

A few of the small tenants, who, with some amount of capital, combine industry and good management, gradually extend

their possessions, and grow up into farmers on a more respectable scale : the rest of this class, and the greater proportion, emigrate to America: the cotters, or as many of them as can remain in the country, fall into the station of labourers on these extended farms, and other subordinate employments, multiplying till every blank is filled up. The peasantry in this way takes the form most fit for a commercial state of society; and in order to wind up and complete the abolition of feudal manners, such a change in the people of the Highlands is absolutely necessary. Their established character, founded upon the habits which the former state of the country required, do not accord with the condition of the lower classes in an industrious community.

The obstacles to the requisite change are chiefly found among the more opulent of the commonalty : among them is the greatest difficulty of exciting a spirit of industry, or directing it to any new pursuit, and, nearly in proportion to the amount of their property, are their dispositions intractable. The

tenants are no doubt those who come nearest to the description of men whom an antient chieftain would value. The cotters may not retain so much of the generous spirit of their warlike ancestors ; but they will be more easily moulded into the character adapted to the present circumstances of the country,—into industrious and contented labourers.



While the small tenants emigrate, the cotters, if any productive employment is introduced as a resource for them, will feel their circumstances ameliorated in proportion to the growth of their industrious habits. Having little in their previous situation to excite feelings of regret, and animated by the prospect of bettering their condition, they will proceed with vigour and cheerfulness in the career that is opened to them.

If by any coercive means the small tenants are obliged to remain and to follow the same pursuits, it must be with a very different spirit. They will not forget that they were once in a higher station, nor will they allow their children to forget that they

were once on a level with the men who insult them by their superiority. Instead of the animating prospect of rising in the world, they will have the idea of degradation constantly rankling in their minds, to damp their exertions and to sour their temper.

It is not to be overlooked that among the peasantry of the Highlands, and particularly among the tenants, a spirit of discontent and irritation is widely diffused; nor will this appear extraordinary to any one who has paid a minute attention to the circumstances attending the breaking up of the feudal system. The progress of the rise of rents, and the frequent removal of the antient possessors of the land, have nearly annihilated in the people all that enthusiastic attachment to their chiefs, which was formerly prevalent, and have substituted feelings of disgust and irritation proportionally violent. It is not the mere burthen of an additional rent that seems hard to them: the cordiality and condescension which they formerly experienced from their superiors are now no more: they have not yet learnt to brook their neg-



lect: they are not yet accustomed to the habits of a commercial society, to the coldness which must be expected by those whose intercourse with their superiors is confined to the daily exchange of labour for its stipulated reward. They remember not only the very opposite behaviour of their former chiefs; they recollect also the services their ancestors performed for them: they recollect that, but for these, the property could not have been preserved: they well know of how little avail was a piece of parchment and a lump of wax, under the old system of the Highlands: they reproach their landlord with ingratitude, and remind him that, but for their fathers, he would now have no estate. The permanent possession which they had always retained of their paternal farms, they consider only as their just right, from the share they had borne in the general defence, and can see no difference between the title of the chief and their own.

Men in whose minds these impressions have taken root, are surely not a desirable population; and if they do not remove,

the irritation that prevails among them may be transmitted from generation to generation, and disturb the peace of the country long after the causes from which it has arisen may be considered as worn out. The example of Ireland may, perhaps, be quoted, to prove to what distant periods the effect of an antiquated ground of discontent may be prolonged by a train of consequences reacting upon each other. Amidst all the variety of opinions that are entertained as to the immediate effect of more recent measures, no one who is acquainted with that kingdom will deny, that the mutual animosity of its religious parties is (at least in a great degree) the legitimate offspring and consequence of the horrible feuds that raged in the 17th century and preceding ages; nor can it be doubted, that if after the forfeitures under Cromwell and King William, all who felt themselves immediately aggrieved by these acts of power, had found the means (as much as they doubtless had the inclination) to seek a distant asylum, the internal state of that country at this day would be much more satisfactory.



To state any comparison with a part of the empire so dreadfully convulsed, may appear an exaggerated view; but incidents have occurred in the Highlands, sufficient to prove that this apprehension is not altogether visionary. For the truth of this, I may appeal to any gentleman who was in the shire of Ross or Cromarty in July and August, 1792. I happened to be there myself at that moment when the irritation alluded to broke out into actual violence. Sheep-farming was then in the first stage of its introduction into that district, but the people had heard of its consequences in others. Roused by the circumstance of a particular estate being turned into sheep-walks, the tenantry of all the adjoining country took part with those who were ejected, and rose in arms. These poor and ignorant men, without leaders, and without any intelligible plan, actuated by indignation merely against their immediate superiors, and as if they did not understand that they were committing an offence against the general government of the kingdom, proceeded to vent their rage in driving away

the sheep that had been brought to stock the grazings. They had for many days the entire command of the country; and it was not from want of opportunity that few acts of pillage or personal violence were committed. In a letter to the officers of government at Edinburgh, a general meeting of gentlemen expressed themselves nearly in these words: ‘ We are at the feet of the ‘ mob, and if they should proceed to burn ‘ our houses, we are incapable of any re- ‘ sistance.’

It is satisfactory to reflect that this irritation of the common people has been hitherto against their immediate superiors only, and that the Highlanders have never given reason to impeach that character of loyalty towards their sovereign which their ancestors maintained. It cannot surely be reckoned of no importance to preserve these sentiments unimpaired; and this object ought not to be overlooked in the consideration of any legislative measure which may appear to these people the result of un-

due partiality for the interest of their superiors, or which can with any plausibility be deemed an infringement of the principles of equal justice towards the lower orders.



This, however, is not the only view in which a direct attempt to restrain emigration may have pernicious consequences. There is scarcely any part of the Highlands that has not in its turn been in a state of irritation as great as that of Ross-shire in 1792; can any comment be necessary to show what would have been the dreadful state of things, if this had come to a height at the same moment over all the country? It has been the good fortune of Scotland, that, from the gradual manner in which the new system of management has advanced, this has happened in different districts, at different times; and by means of the emigrations, the discontented people of one have been removed, before the same causes of discontent had produced their full effect in another. What must we think, then, of

the policy which would impede this salutary drain, and would prevent a population infected with deep and permanent seeds of every angry passion, from removing and making way for one of a more desirable character ?

IX. *Prejudices of the Highland proprietors against Emigration: mistakes from which they arise.*



IF the preceding arguments are satisfactory, it must appear very unaccountable, that the gentlemen of the Highlands should express such extreme aversion against emigration. Since the removal of the superfluous population is necessary for the advance of their rents, why (it may be asked) do they quarrel with that which is so beneficial to them? But those who reflect how very common it is for men to mistake their own interest, will not consider this as a paradox. The change that has taken place in the Highlands, is so extensive, its effects are so complicated, and so many circumstances have concurred to disguise their operation, that it ought not to excite surprise if they are not generally understood.

The prejudices which many persons entertain on this subject arise from the most patriotic, though mistaken motives. Ascrib-

ing the spirit of emigration to mere capricious restlessness; they deprecate in it the loss of the nursery of soldiers that has hitherto been found in the Highlands, not advert-
ing to the decay of those causes from which that advantage was derived. They see the possibility of employing great numbers in works of productive industry, and overlook the distinctions which render these unsuitable to a great proportion of the actual inhabitants.

To these have in some instances been superadded mistaken views of private interest. Some proprietors, accustomed to the advantageous facility of recruiting, would wish to preserve this power, at the same time that they profit by the advance of their rents. A few individuals have perceived the incompatibility of these objects, and, unwilling to relinquish the antient splendour of a numerous train of dependants, have frankly resolved to make an adequate pecuniary sacrifice: but in a much greater number of instances this incompatibility has been overlooked, or seen indistinctly; and the conse-

quence has been a train of inconsistent management, vibrating between contradictory motives.



The ideas of the Highland gentry have also perhaps been influenced by the very unjust cry that has been prevalent against themselves, and the unfavourable impressions, as to the tendency of their conduct, which the public have been led to entertain. The long continued indulgence of the landlords, the sacrifice of rent to which they submitted for so many years to preserve their people, are little known beyond their immediate neighbourhood. It would be difficult to find a proprietor in other parts of the kingdom, who to please his tenants would accept a rent not half the value of his land. This has been done by many in the Highlands, and yet these gentlemen have been generally reputed severe landlords.

The old system of the Highlands, so long established and deeply rooted, could not be broken up without a great degree of popular odium. When any proprietor grew tired of

the loss of rent he sustained, and resolved to enjoy the full value of his estate, the clamours of the tenantry were loud against his unjust and oppressive conduct (as they deemed it), and were re-echoed from distant parts of the kingdom. When a populous valley was converted into sheep-walks, the author of the change was held up as an enemy of the public, who, for a sordid interest, promoted the desolation of his country; and the remote consequences through which these "partial evils" terminate in "universal good," were not to be seen by superficial observers.

The gentlemen of the Highlands might have repelled these aspersions, by appealing to the undeniable general right of landed proprietors to manage their property for their own advantage: but this argument was too much at variance with the established prejudices of their neighbourhood to be well received. Conscious, therefore, of the unpopularity of their conduct, and sore under these impressions, they acted as if

diffident of the justice of their own cause, and, instead of meeting the question on fair and manly grounds, recriminated with accusations of capricious discontent on the part of the people, excited only by the artifices of men who had an interest to delude them.



Such motives of pique, and a remnant of the feudal pride which a numerous clan was calculated to inspire, have perhaps more influence than any view of pecuniary interest, in exciting a jealous antipathy against emigration in the minds of the more considerable proprietors of the Highlands ; and this may account for a singular contradiction that has been frequently observed. Many of these gentlemen have, in their cooler moments, acknowledged, that the over-population of their estates was a loss to them, and expressed a wish that a great proportion could be removed, and have nevertheless been warmed, even to indignation, when any of their own tenantry showed a disposition to emigration. When their feelings

have been roused, the phantom of antient prejudice has put to flight every sober consideration of interest.

These impressions among the greater proprietors are sometimes perhaps strengthened by the clamour of certain persons among their dependants, or their neighbours of an inferior order; some of whom have an aversion against emigration, founded on motives not altogether so honourable, though more active, as arising more immediately from views of pecuniary interest.

Among the few branches of business which furnish more or less employment for labouring people in the Highlands, is the manufacture of kelp, which, in some instances, constitutes a great part of the value of property. The sea-weed from which this article is made is cut on rocks along the shore, which are sometimes annexed to the adjoining farms. In most cases, however, these rocks are reserved by the landlords, who let them from year to year, or rather employ labourers to make the kelp at a stipu-



lated allowance *per ton*. Many gentlemen feel on this account an immediate interest in keeping down the wages of labour, and therefore imagine the crowded state of population to be an advantage. Some go so far as to assert that if they had fewer hands, the making of kelp must be given up altogether, or at least that the increased expense of the work would reduce its nett value to a trifle. This may be ; but the difference of expense is not all clear gain to the landlord : the season of kelp-making is but a few weeks in the year ; and in so far as any gentleman retains a greater number of people on his estate than *full* employment can be found for, he must do it by letting land to them below its value. In all the great kelp stations, the land is, in fact, made an object totally subordinate, and let at rents more inadequate to its real value than in any other parts of the Highlands.

Were an accurate comparison to be made, it is probable that the proprietor would find it more for his advantage, on the whole, to pay the fullest price for the manufacture of

his kelp, and to let his land at an adequate rent. But it is not in this light that the subject will appear to some other persons who are engaged in the business. They feel all the benefit of the low price of labour, while the sacrifice that is made to maintain that low price comes out of the pocket of another. We may add, that a great proprietor, of a liberal mind, would not allow his judgment to be warped by a difference of 10 or 15s. per ton on his kelp; but to the tacksmen and other inferior people that difference forms a great proportion of their profit. Among them, therefore, we find a zeal approaching to fury, when any thing threatens to interfere with this interest*.

To men of this class the depression of the price of labour appears an object of importance in other respects. If they have not kelp to make, they feel the same interest in keeping down the wages of their agricultural servants, or of those they employ to execute fences and various works of that kind. From these causes a considerable

* See Appendix [R.]

body of men feel a direct interest in repressing emigration ; and it is not to be wondered at that their clamours should impose on the greater proprietors.

These gentlemen are only occasionally resident on their estates ; and, feeling that their own personal acquaintance with the internal state of the country is imperfect, are disposed to place too great a reliance on the opinions of others, whose practical information they believe to be complete, and whom they do not suspect to have interests so directly at variance with their own. This evil is much increased, by the practice (unfortunately too common with the proprietors of great Highland estates) of letting farms to their factors or land-stewards, and allowing them to engage in various petty branches of business, by which their interest is identified with that of the very people on whom they ought to be a check, and is set in opposition to that of their employers *.

* See the latter part of Appendix [T.]

X. *Conduct of the Highland Society. Emigrant Regulation Bill.*

IF, from all these circumstances, individual proprietors so far mistake their own interest, it will not be surprising that the same mistakes should pervade and influence a public body. The respectable names which appear on the list of the Highland Society, and the benevolence which marks their proceedings in general, leave no reason to doubt of their conduct respecting emigration having been founded on the purest motives. Nevertheless they have lent the sanction of their name to representations of the most partial nature, and have recommended measures inconsistent with every principle of justice.

As this Society claim (and I believe without any competition) the merit of the bill passed in 1803, for regulating the transportation of emigrants, the consideration of that bill cannot easily be separated from a discussion of the arguments and statements upon

which they recommended the measure. They transmitted for the consideration of Government, and of several members of the Legislature, three Reports, on the emigrations from the Highlands, in which many topics connected with the improvement of that district are treated with great judgment, and on the most liberal principles of political œconomy. Intermixed, however, with these discussions, we find some of a very different description*.

The first Report commences with a statement of the causes of emigration, among which are enumerated,

* These Reports have never been published, but are noticed in the Introduction to Vol. ii. Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society. The first was presented to the Society in January, 1802—the second in June following—the third in March, 1803.—Some extracts have been printed as an Appendix to a “Report of a Committee of the House of Commons on the Survey of the Coasts &c. of Scotland, relating to Emigration”—ordered to be printed June 9th, 1803. The quotations I have occasion to make, refer to the copies engrossed in the Records of the Society, with which they have been collated.

‘ 1. Such an increase of population as the
 ‘ country, in its present situation, and with
 ‘ a total want of openings for the exertion of
 ‘ industry, cannot support.’

‘ 2. The removal of many of the tenants
 ‘ from their farms, in consequence of a con-
 ‘ viction on the part of the proprietors, that
 ‘ they will be better cultivated and managed,
 ‘ and pay better rents, when let in larger
 ‘ divisions; and more particularly, in con-
 ‘ sequence of the preference now very ge-
 ‘ nerally given to a sheep stock, of which
 ‘ the management does not, like that of a
 ‘ black-cattle pasture, admit of minute par-
 ‘ tition of the farm, nor require nearly so
 ‘ many hands.’

‘ 3. The active circulation of seductive
 ‘ accounts of the immense advantages to be
 ‘ derived from going to settle in America.’

The two first of these are so candidly
 stated, and furnish so plain and rational an
 account of the fact, that it must excite
 surprise in the reader to find the last-men-

tioned reason insisted upon as the principal and the most extensive in its effects.



The Reporter indeed assumes the fact, that the condition of a labourer in America is not so advantageous as in Britain* ; and, taking for granted, that the flattering accounts which have reached the people as to America are all false, has to explain how in the course of so long an intercourse as has been kept up between different districts of Scotland and different settlements in America, no contradiction of these falsehoods should have appeared. Here he does not think it beneath the dignity of the Society to repeat the threadbare and ridiculous story of Uncle James, and to assert, that all letters, not of a particular tendency, are detained†; as if every letter had to pass a scrutiny, and as if there was no post-office establishment in America. Had some inquiry been made before such an assertion was hazarded, the Society might have learnt, that throughout

* First Report—page 11—(the whole manuscript contains 16).

† See Appendix [S.]

all *British* America at least, the posts are under the same regulations as at home, and that (under the authority of the Postmaster-General of England) letters may be conveyed from almost every part of the colonies, more tediously indeed, but (sea-risk excepted) with as much safety as within Great Britain itself.

It is truly surprising, that gentlemen of respectable abilities and information, should give credit to fables of so little apparent probability. To repeat such stories without examination, can be productive of no good. On the contrary, there are so many of the people in the Highlands who have information of the situation of their friends in America on indubitable authority, confirmed by concurring testimonies, that it is in vain to think of concealing from them the true state of the fact; and the attempt to impose on their understanding can only tend to confirm the jealous suspicions, which they entertain against their superiors.

In another Report we find details of the emigrations going on, and representations

of a spirit, from which the immediate and total devastation of the country is predicted*. The discussions contained in the preceding parts of these remarks render it unnecessary to enter into any particular refutation of this assertion. It must, however, be observed, that this representation (as well as the particulars that are given of the artifices of individuals to delude the people) appears to have been transmitted from the Island of Benbecula, one of the prime stations of the kelp manufacture†. No reference is given in the Report, to the authority on which the facts are stated; and the tenor of the accompanying remarks may at least give room to doubt the coolness and moderation of the narrator, a circumstance of no less importance than his veracity for ascertaining the credibility of his information‡.

* Third Report—page 1 and 2.

† This Island is a part of the Long Island, concerning which some particulars are stated in page 115: sufficient to enable the reader to judge what grounds there are for apprehending a total devastation.

‡ See Appendix [T.]

The facts related are not indeed in themselves improbable: the grounds of that irritation which is felt by the common people have already been explained; and it will not be thought extraordinary, that those individuals who have determined on emigration, should speak out their sentiments with little reserve, and make use of the prevailing temper of the country, to induce others to join in their schemes.

Independantly of any question as to the policy of retaining against their will, a population infected with a spirit of discontent, it seems very doubtful whether their superiors are following the best methods to allay the ferment. If there exist among the Highlanders any such wanton discontent and restlessness as the Society allege, nothing seems so likely to keep alive and extend this spirit, as any attempt to repress it by individual persecution. Every manly heart will revolt at such means employed to restrain the exercise of an acknowledged natural right, and the indignation which every act of oppression must excite, may actually im-

pel those to emigration who would never have thought of it.

Should an unreasonable and unnecessary disposition to emigration be any where observed, those who wish to obviate it, may perhaps profit by an example, which occurred in the Island of Barra in 1802. A number of people were preparing to emigrate. The proprietor, without allowing any hint to escape of his regret at the circumstance, told his tenants, that since such was their determination, he wished to see them well accommodated, and would assist them to negotiate for a ship to convey them to America. The frankness of this procedure laid every murmur at rest, and no more was heard of the emigration. Nor is this the only instance that might be quoted, where a rising spirit of this kind has been allayed by the temper and moderation of a proprietor.

Though the machinations of the leaders of emigration, as described in the Reports, are nothing more than might reasonably be

expected from men of that stamp in a country where a general tendency to irritation prevails ; yet the Society consider these artifices as the prime source of all the discontent they observe, and assign as their ultimate motive, the unjust and tempting gains accruing to the traders in emigration*. No explanation however is given of the mode in which these extraordinary gains arise, and therefore it may not be superfluous to state a few of the details which are passed over.

Whenever the circumstances of any part of the country induced the people to think of emigration; the usual procedure has generally been, that the leading individuals have circulated a subscription-paper, to which all those, who agreed to join in chartering a ship for the purpose, subscribed their names ; and whenever they had thereby ascertained their number, they called together all those who had declared their intention to emigrate.

* Third Report—page 4 to 6 : (the whole MS. containing 13.) See also Introduction to Vol. ii. Transactions of the Highland Society, p. 8 and 9.



If previous information had been obtained of the price at which shipping could be procured, it was usual for some person of the most respectable situation and property among the associates to make proposals to transact the business for them at a certain rate for each passenger; if his offer was accepted, one half of the price agreed upon was deposited by each in his hands. With the money so collected, he proceeded to some of the great commercial ports, to make the best bargain he could with a ship-owner, contracting for such provisions and accommodation as were customary, and giving security that the rest of the passage-money should be paid previous to embarkation. When no individual was prepared to undertake the business in this manner, some one in whom the rest of the associates had confidence, was usually deputed to negotiate in the name of the others, and to procure them the best terms he could. In either case, however, the price to be paid by the individual emigrants, was always well understood to be rather higher than the price bargained for with the ship-owner. A dif-

ference of from 10 to 20s. on each passenger, was not considered as unreasonable, to compensate the trouble, expenses, and risks, to which the intermediate contractor was subject. The ship-owner seldom made more by the voyage than a mere freight; and the ordinary gains of the contractor, who was usually himself one of the emigrants, do not seem entitled to the epithet of unjust and tempting, or to be assigned as the motive for deceits and impositions so artful and so extensive as to be capable of diffusing the spirit of emigration all over the Highlands.

It may be readily believed, that in the course of such a transaction as has been described, carried on among men of low rank and little education, (the contractor being sometimes but a few steps above the rest of the associates,) much higgling would take place, sometimes deceit and imposition, and almost always a great deal of petty artifice and vulgar intrigue. It does not appear how the regulations proposed by the Society can operate to remedy any of the inconveniences



arising from these circumstances, or to obviate the deceit and imposition which may occasionally have been practised by contractors. In this, as in other trades, competition must be the best check to abuse. The emigrants understand the accommodation for which they stipulate, and competition alone can prevent them from paying too much for it. All that can be necessary therefore, to put an end to the unjust and tempting gains, of which the Society complain, is to enforce, on the part of the shipowner and contractor, a fair performance of their bargain; leaving it to every one to make the best terms he can for himself. It is surely an extravagant allegation, that the ignorance of the people as to the nature of the voyage, puts them on a footing with men who have no will of their own, and renders it equally necessary to regulate their accommodation as that of the negro slaves*.

The necessity of regulation is however inferred from 'the hardships to which the emigrants were subject on their passage

* See First Report, p. 7.

‘from this country,’ which, it is said, ‘were ascertained beyond the possibility of doubt ‘by authentic documents*.’ It is rather singular, however, that, to find an instance in point, the Society go back as far as the year 1773. There is indeed one other instance quoted, in 1791, and from the details that are given, it is evident that the ship referred to was too much crowded to be comfortable. As to the actual result, however, all we can learn is, that being put back after twelve days boisterous weather, the passengers were tired, especially the women and children, and did not choose to proceed :—a consequence very likely among people who for the first time in their lives were heartily sea-sick !

In speaking of the emigrations of 1801, the Society admit that minute particulars have not come to their knowledge: they state, however, *upon hearsay*, “that 53 of “the passengers died on board one of the “vessels before reaching America.”—A committee of the House of Commons receiving

* Vol. ii. Transactions of the Highland Society. Introduction, p. 7.

this intelligence from so respectable a quarter deemed it worthy of being quoted among the grounds for a Legislative Enactment*. They could not indeed suppose that the Highland Society would lend the sanction of their name to a mere vague report : but surely the Society, being informed of a fact so shocking to humanity, and giving such entire credit to it, ought to have followed out the inquiry, and brought the accusation home to those whose criminal negligence or avarice had occasioned the disaster. This however they have never yet thought proper to do, and have never even named the vessel to which they refer.

In calling for a remedy against the abuses they allege, the Society disclaim any view of restraining ‘ the constitutional freedom of ‘ the Highlanders,’ and declare that their only object is, ‘ to regulate the transportation of emigrants in such a way, that no ‘ undue profit may arise from its being conducted in a manner destructive to the pas-

* See the Appendix to the Report above referred to from a Committee of the House of Commons, “ on the “ Survey of the Coasts &c. of Scotland, relating to “ Emigration.”

‘sengers*.’ It cannot be denied, that this is a liberal profession; and if the legislative provisions adopted on their suggestion correspond to this profession, the Society are entitled to the gratitude of the emigrants, as well as of the rest of the public. Let us see then how far this can be traced, and whether the regulations laid down are ‘absolutely necessary for the preservation of the health and lives of the emigrants†.’

The most important clauses of the bill are those which regulate the number of persons which any ship is permitted to carry, and the provisions which are to be laid in and allowed to them. As to provisions, the customary food of the people to be conveyed cannot be objected to, as an inadequate criterion of what is absolutely necessary. A passenger at sea, with little or no opportunity of exercise, cannot well be supposed to require more food than when engaged in a laborious life at home.

A bill of fare is laid down for the passen-

* Third Report.

† Transactions of the Highland Society. Introduction.

gers, with no part of which they are *themselves at liberty to dispense* ; and in this there is an allowance of farinaceous food, more than equal to the entire consumption of country labourers in any part of Scotland that I am acquainted with. Over and above this, each person is obliged to take 3½lb. of beef or pork, weekly. The Highland Society indeed recommended 7lb. “as absolutely necessary for a passenger*.” Was it from their intimate knowledge of the domestic œconomy of the peasantry of the Highlands, that the Society were led to judge such an allowance of animal food indispensable,—even for an infant at the breast! This seems to have escaped the notice of the gentlemen employed by the Board of Agriculture to examine the Highlands ; for we find in one of these Surveys, that ‘animal food is rarely tasted by the lower order of tenantry :’ and in another, that among the farmers ‘there is not 5lb. of meat consumed in the family throughout the year†.’

* See First Report—page 9. (N.B. the MS. contain 16 pages.)

† Agricultural Survey of the central Highlands by Mr. Marshall, p. 21.—Ditto of the Northern Counties, p. 82.

In the regulation which they recommended as to the numbers which any ship should be allowed to carry, the Society surely did not mean a censure on His Majesty's Government: yet the allowance of room which they lay down (as *absolutely necessary* for the health of the passengers) is nearly double of that of the Transport service. The disproportion does not indeed appear quite so great at first sight; for the bill requires 2 ton for every passenger, while in the transports $1\frac{1}{4}$ ton is the usual allowance; but that is for full-aged men: the bill requires the same accommodation for the youngest child, as for any other person; and will it be contended, that an infant requires as large a bed as a grown man?

The regulations upon this head which were customary among the emigrant passage ships, deserve attention. They were the result of experience; and the scale of proportion by which children of different ages were rated, both as to the payment of passage money, and the allowances of provisions and birth-room, appears to be founded on pretty accurate principles. In their mode of

reckoning, the passengers of all ages (when they consisted of entire families, with the usual proportion of young and old) were seldom equivalent to more than two thirds of their number of grown up persons. According to this calculation, two tons for every individual is as great an allowance as three tons for a grown man, which is not far from the proportion that the tonnage of a man of war bears to her crew alone.



These regulations are so far from being *absolutely necessary*, that it is difficult to see what object they can serve, except to enhance the expense of passage. This object, indeed, is not entirely disavowed by the Society; and in the history of their Transactions the regulations are spoken of as ‘having the effect of a certain necessary burthen on the voyages of emigrants*.’ It is rather an unfortunate coincidence, that an object of so very different a nature should be combined with the regard which is professed for the comfort and safety of the emigrants. Some persons may be inclined to doubt

* Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society, vol. ii. Introduction, p. 9.

whether humanity was the leading motive of the Society.

Whatever may have been their views, it has certainly been the subject of exultation to many individuals, that the bill, by rendering the passage too expensive for the pecuniary means of the tenantry, must leave them at the mercy of their superiors: but I apprehend, that however oppressive its consequences may be, the bill can produce this effect only in a very inconsiderable degree.

Every one who is acquainted with the characteristic obstinacy of the Highlanders, must be sensible how much the attempt to keep them at home by force, will rivet their determination to take the first opportunity of leaving the country. The circumstances of the times may protract the execution of this intention; but few will be prevented by all the difference of expense. It has been observed, that the tenants in general have been hitherto enabled, by the sale of their farming stock, not only to defray the expense of their passage, but to carry some money

along with them. The Highland Society estimate the average amount * which is carried in this way, by the emigrants, at 10% each family of the poorest class, and by some a great deal more: they instance one ship, in which they give reason to suppose, that the whole party carried with them 1500%. The enhanced expense of passage arising from the regulations, will encroach upon this reserve of cash, and, in some cases, may totally exhaust it. Should this happen, it will not deter the emigrant from trying his fate. Few of the Highlanders are so ignorant of America, as not to know that a persevering exertion of personal industry will supply the want of every other resource; that, if they should have to land there without a shilling, they may be thereby exposed to temporary hardships, and retarded for a few years in their progress; but the independence, which is their great object, will still be within their reach.

What is to be thought, however, of the superabundant humanity of the Highland

* Third Report.

Society, of which this is all the result— which, to save the emigrants from the miserable consequences of being as much crowded on ship-board as the King's troops themselves, and of living there on the same fare as at home, reduces them to land in the colonies in the state of beggars, instead of having a comfortable provision beforehand?

Humanity apart, can such waste be considered as a matter of indifference in a national view? The money which the emigrants carry with them serves as capital, by means of which the forests of the colonies are brought into a productive state, the markets of Great Britain supplied with various articles of value, and the consumption of her manufactures extended. Is it consistent with any rational policy, that individuals should be compelled to waste this capital in expenses absolutely futile and useless? The framers of the bill, indeed, can perceive no distinction between the money expended by the emigrants for their passage, and that which they carry with them to the

colonies ; they set it all down alike—as ‘lost
‘ to the kingdom for ever *.’



It cannot, for a moment, be supposed, that these considerations can have occurred to the Highland Society, or that they would have recommended the measure in question, if they had been aware of all its consequences. It would not, perhaps, be just to blame them for not having considered the subject with perfect impartiality, or extended their views to the general interests of the empire. The peculiar objects of their institution lead them to pay an exclusive attention to the local interests of one district. They have given their opinion not in the character of a judge, but as a party in the cause, as representing one class of men, for whom they appear as advocates at the bar of the public.

* See a “ Communication from a Gentleman in the
“ North of Scotland,” inserted in Appendix C to the
“ Report of a Committee of the House of Commons,
“ on the Survey of the Coasts, &c. of Scotland, re-
“ lating to Emigration.”

It has fallen to my share to plead a too long neglected cause, in opposition to these powerful adversaries: I have treated their arguments with the freedom which belongs to fair discussion, but, I trust, without any sentiment inconsistent with that respect to which they are so justly entitled, from the general tenor of their patriotic labours*.

* In the Highland Society, and I presume in every other that is equally extensive, the whole business is managed by a very small proportion of the members: nine-tenths of them, perhaps, scarcely hear of the proceedings that are carried on in the name of the whole. Having the honour to be upon their list myself, I should certainly be very sorry to think that *every* member of the Society is held responsible for all their proceedings.

XI. *Importance of the emigrants to our colonies: custom of settling in the United States: means of inducing a change of destination: will not increase the spirit of emigration.*

KEEPING in view the distinction already insisted upon, between the cotters and the small tenants, I think it may now be assumed as sufficiently proved, that emigration, to a greater or less extent, is likely to go on from the Highlands, till the latter class is entirely drained off. If this be admitted, I need not take up much time to prove, that it is an object deserving of some attention, and of some exertion, to secure these emigrants to our own colonies, rather than abandon them to a foreign country.

Some persons, indeed, have insinuated, that the colonies are altogether of little use. That is a point which it would be foreign to my present purpose to discuss. Those, however, who are of that opinion, ought to argue, not for their being neglected, but relinquished; and, if they are to be retained,

it cannot surely admit of a doubt, that it is better the overflowings of our own population should contribute to their improvement, than to that of a country with which we are unconnected, and which may become hostile to us: it is besides of no small importance, that our own colonies should be peopled by men, whose manners and principles are consonant to our own government.

It is with regret I have heard persons of distinguished judgment and information give way to the opinion, that all the continental colonies, and particularly the Canadas, must inevitably fall, at no distant period of time, into the hands of the Americans. That continued mismanagement may bring this about, cannot be denied; but I think it equally clear, that, by steadily pursuing a proper system, such an event may be rendered not only improbable, but almost impossible.

The danger to be apprehended, is not merely from an invading military force, but



much more from the disposition of the colonists themselves, the republican principles of some, and the lukewarm affection of others. From the original composition of some of the settlements, formed at the close of the American war entirely by refugee loyalists, we might naturally expect to find a population firmly attached to the interests of Britain. The fidelity, of which they had given proof during the war, was recompensed by the scrupulous attention of Government to their relief and support, when the contest became desperate; and, in all the situations where an asylum was provided for them, they received advantages unprecedented in the history of colonization. This generous conduct of Government has not been forgotten; and the most satisfactory dispositions still remain among these loyalists and most of their descendants.

But the general character of some of the colonies has received an unfortunate tinge, from the admixture of settlers of a very different description. Numbers of Americans, of principles the most opposite to the

Loyalists (many of them worthless characters, the mere refuse of the States), have since found their way into these provinces. Unless effectual means are adopted to check this influx, there is every probability that it will continue; for, in consequence of some capital errors in the original regulations laid down for the direction of the officers intrusted with the disposal of waste lands, and from the state of landed property arising from these, there is a continual encouragement for settlers of the same description. In some parts, where, from local circumstances, it is peculiarly desirable to have a population of steady dispositions, these intruders are fast approaching to an absolute majority of numbers: there is even too much probability of their principles infecting the mass of the people throughout the provinces.

Under these circumstances, it is evident what important services may be derived from such a body of settlers as the Highland emigrants would form. It is not merely from their old established principles of loyalty,



and from their military character, that they would be a valuable acquisition. It is a point of no small consequence, that their language and manners are so totally different from those of the Americans. This will preserve them from the infection of dangerous principles: but it seems, in this view, of essential importance, that, whatever situation be selected for them, they should be concentrated in one national settlement, where particular attention should be bestowed to keep them distinct and separate, and where their peculiar and characteristic manners should be carefully encouraged.

It is much to be regretted, that more attention had not been paid to this principle, not only with respect to the Highlanders, but also the Dutch and Germans, who, in some parts, form a considerable proportion. Had these also been separated into distinct national settlements, they would have formed a strong barrier against the contagion of American sentiments; and any general combination against the mother country would have been rendered almost impossible.

The local circumstances of the different provinces, the political and commercial advantages to be expected from the further colonization of each, the precautions requisite for this security, and the means which may be found for remedying the errors of their former administration, are topics which would lead into too great length, and which this is not the proper place to discuss. I must proceed, therefore, to the points immediately connected with the subject of these observations, to consider the measures that are necessary for diverting the current of emigration, and directing it to any part of the colonies which may appear to government most advisable. It has been supposed that this could not be done without such encouragements as would tend very much to increase the evil in general: but I hope to make it appear that this is a mistake; and that the object may be accomplished without recurring to measures that can have any permanent bad effect.

The difficulty of directing the emigrations of the Highlanders, arises from their pecu-



liarly gregarious disposition. Circumstances, in a great measure accidental, induced the first persons who left the different districts of the Highlands, to fix themselves in various situations. The first steps of this kind were taken with feelings of awful uncertainty. They were decided upon, under a total want of information respecting the country towards which their course was directed; except, perhaps, by interested representations of persons concerned in land speculations. It is said that some of the first adventurers had fatal experience of the falsehood of these;—that they were misled and ruined.

Whether from the tradition of such events, or from the habitual jealousy which is generally found among men in the earlier stages of society, it is certain that the Highlanders always show great distrust of any information which does not come from their own immediate connexions; and, from this disposition, those adventures which have proved fortunate, have been scarcely less important to the persons immediately em-

barked in them, than to the friends whom they had left behind. These were soon informed of their success; and to men who foresaw the necessity of similar steps, it was highly interesting to be certain of an asylum. The success of those with whom they were acquainted, was a sufficient motive to determine their choice of situation; and having found a rallying point, all who at subsequent periods left the same district of Scotland, gathered round the same neighbourhood in the colonies.

No one of these settlements, however, gained an universal ascendancy. A number were formed about the same period of time, and each attracted the peculiar attention of the district from which it had proceeded. The information sent home from each, as to the circumstances of the country in which it was situated, did not spread far. The nature of a mountainous country, and the difficulty of mutual intercourse, tended to confine any information to the valley in which it was first received. These natural causes were strengthened by those feudal

animosities of the different clans, which were not entirely forgotten at the period of the first emigrations. Thus it often happened, that the inhabitants of one estate in the Highlands acquired a strong predilection for a particular place in America, while on the adjoining estate, separated only by a river or a mountain, a preference as decided was given to another settlement, perhaps extremely remote from it.



In this manner the people of Braedalbane and other parts of Perthshire, as also those of Badenoch and Strathspey, and part of Ross-shire, have generally resorted to New York, and have formed settlements on the Delaware, the Mohawk, and the Connecticut rivers. A settlement has been formed in Georgia, by people chiefly from Inverness-shire. Those of Argyleshire and its islands, of the Isle of Skye, and of the greater part of the Long Island, of part of Ross and Sutherland, have a like connexion with North Carolina, where they have formed the settlement of Cross Creek, noted in the history of the American war for its loy-

alty and its misfortunes, and since named Fayetteville. Some people from Lochaber, Glengary, &c. who joined the settlements in New York at the eve of the American war, were forced, by the ensuing disturbances, to remove themselves, and take refuge in Canada, to which they have attracted the subsequent emigrations of these districts. The people, again, of Moydart, and some other districts in Inverness-shire, with a few of the islands, are those who have formed the Scottish settlements of Pictou in Nova Scotia, and the Island of St. John, now called Prince Edward's.

The continued and repeated communication between these settlers, and their relations in Scotland, has given the people of every part of the Highlands a pretty accurate acquaintance with the circumstances of some particular colony; and the emigrants, though their ideas are often sanguine, are by no means so ignorant of the nature of the country they are going to, as some persons have supposed. But the information which any



of the peasantry have of America, is all confined to one spot; to the peculiar circumstances of that place, they ascribe all those advantages which it has in common with other new settled countries. Of the other colonies they are perfectly ignorant, and have often very mistaken notions. Those, in particular, whose views are directed towards the southern states, have received very gloomy impressions of the climate of Canada, and of all the northern colonies. But to rectify these mistaken opinions, is by no means the greatest difficulty in bringing them to change their plans. The number of their friends or relations who have all gone to the same quarter, give it the attraction almost of another home.

It is therefore indispensable, that, to overcome these motives, some pretty strong inducement should be held out to the first party who will settle in the situation offered to them. To detached individuals, it would be difficult to offer any advantage sufficiently strong to counterbalance the pleasure

of being settled among friends, as well as the assistance they might expect from their relations. But if means can be found of influencing a considerable body of people, connected by the ties of blood and friendship, they may have less aversion to try a new situation : and if such a settlement be once conducted safely through its first difficulties, till the adventurers feel a confidence in their resources, and acquire some attachment to the country, the object may be considered as almost entirely accomplished. All those circumstances which operate against the first proposal of change, will serve to confirm it when it is brought to this stage of advancement ; and no peculiar encouragement will any longer be necessary.

Even in the first instance, the encouragement which may be sufficient to induce people to change their destination, must be very far short of that which would induce men, who have no other motive, to think of emigration. To excite a spirit of emigration where no such inclination before existed, is a more arduous task than those who



have not paid a minute attention to the subject may imagine. To emigrate, implies a degree of violence to many of the strongest feelings of human nature; a separation from a number of connexions dear to the heart; a dereliction of the attachments of youth, which few can resolve upon without the spur of necessity. Dr. Adam Smith has justly observed, that 'Man is of all species of luggage the most difficult to be transported;' the tendency of the labouring poor to remain in the situation where they have taken root, being so strong that the most palpable and immediate advantages are scarcely sufficient to overcome the force of habit, as long as they find a possibility of going on in the line they have been accustomed to. In one out of a hundred, this tendency may be overcome by motives of ambition or enthusiasm; but when a general and universal disposition to emigration exists in any country, it would need strong grounds indeed, to justify the supposition that it arises from any accidental or superficial cause.

There occurs, in the history of the Highland emigrations, one striking example how little permanent effect arises from any casual and occasional encouragement. I allude to the settlement of Georgia in 1722. The patrons of that undertaking, conceiving the Highlanders to be people of a description likely to answer their purpose, sent agents to Inverness to publish their proposals. The causes which have since produced so strong a spirit of emigration in the Highlands had not begun to operate; and nothing of the kind had taken place, except in the case of some few detached individuals who may by various accidents have found their way to America. The settlement, however, was to be conducted under such respectable patronage, the terms were so liberal, and the advantages offered to people of the poorest class so extraordinary, that there was no difficulty in finding a considerable number of that description who entered into the undertaking. But this does not appear to have had any effect in occasioning a general spirit of emigration. It was forty years afterwards, before any such spirit was to be observed.

We neither find that the people who went to Georgia were the subject of regret in the country they left, nor that this operation, by its subsequent effects, produced any such inconvenience as to give rise to the slightest complaint.



This example seems to prove that the utmost effect of such encouragement will by itself be inconsiderable and transitory; and that there is no reason to be apprehensive of the consequences of any temporary inducements which government might judge proper for the purpose of diverting the emigration into a different channel. I have observed that there is no necessity for continuing this encouragement long, or affording it to any but the first who should enter into the measures proposed, or at most to a few people from each district. Supposing that such a party were even wholly composed of persons who would not otherwise have emigrated, it is not clear that they would form a nett addition to the general amount of emigration; for, if I have been successful in proving that this disposition arises from un-

avoidable and radical causes in the state of the country, then must it go on till these causes are exhausted, and the population is brought to that level which natural circumstances point out. A certain number of people must leave the country ; and whether it falls to the lot of this or of that man to go, the general result will not be affected. If a set of people, who had no such intention, are by any means induced to go, they make room for others to stay, who would otherwise have been under the necessity of emigrating.

The force of this principle is illustrated by the feelings of the country-people themselves on the subject ; by the anxiety they frequently show that others should emigrate, though they have no such intention themselves ; merely that they may have a chance of procuring lands which would not otherwise be in their offer. It has been known in more than one instance, that an individual, who felt that his example would have some weight, has even pretended to join in the emigration, and made every demonstra-

tion of zeal for the undertaking, till his neighbours have been fully committed, and has then deserted them as soon as he could see any vacant farm, that he could have a chance of procuring.

7 But if peculiar advantages are to be given to encourage a party of emigrants to settle in a new situation, is it to be supposed that these must all be people who would not otherwise have left the country? Or rather is not such a supposition contrary to every probability? Let encouragement be held out, even in the most indiscriminate manner, the persons most likely to accept the offer, will certainly be those whose views were previously directed to emigration. Perhaps, indeed, the more opulent among the people who have taken such a resolution, will not be easily diverted from their preconceived plans, and will be little influenced by the offer of assistance. Those who feel some difficulty in accomplishing their views, will be the more ready to listen to terms by which the attainment of their object is rendered more easy. The encouragement held

out, must therefore be of such a nature as to suit those whose means are scanty. There is a chance, no doubt, that, in this way, emigration may be brought within the reach of a few, who could not otherwise have made the attempt. The difference, however, must be trifling; and, at any rate, the object in view deserves some sacrifice. There are individuals, perhaps, in the Highlands, who may think it better that a hundred persons should emigrate to the United States, than that a hundred and one should go to our own colonies. But this is a sentiment in which, I trust, they will not be joined by many whose opinions deserve respect.

XII. *Measures adopted in pursuance of these views by the author: Settlement formed in Prince Edward's Island: its difficulties, progress and final success.*

WHEN these general principles are understood, the part which I have myself taken, in regard to the settlers whom I conveyed, in 1803, to Prince Edward's Island, will need little explanation. Of these settlers the greatest proportion were from the Isle of Sky; a district which had so decided a connexion with North Carolina, that no emigrants had ever gone from it to any other quarter. There were a few others from Ross-shire, from the North part of Argyleshire, and from some interior districts of Inverness-shire, all of whose connexions lay in some part of the United States. There were some also from a part of the Island of Uist, where the emigration had not taken a decided direction.

If my views had extended no further than the mere improvement of a property in the

colony I have mentioned, I might, without any loss, and with much less trouble, have found settlers enough in the districts where the custom of emigrating to the same quarter was already established. But this was not my purpose. I had undertaken to settle these lands with emigrants, whose views were directed towards the United States; and, without any wish to increase the general spirit of emigration, I could not avoid giving more than ordinary advantages to those who should join me. The prejudices entertained against the situation I proposed, were industriously fomented by some persons who had conceived a jealousy against my undertaking; and, in consequence of this obstruction, I found it necessary to extend my offers of encouragement as far as I could, without a total disregard of my own interest.

To induce people to embark in the undertaking, was, however, the least part of my task. The difficulties which a new settler has to struggle with, are so great and various, that, in the oldest and best established



colonies, they are not to be avoided altogether ; and it is rare that any one does not, at some time in the course of the first two or three years, feel disheartened and repent of his conduct. Of these discouragements the emigrants are seldom fully aware. It was to be expected, that men who had been induced to deviate from their own intentions, would ascribe all these unforeseen difficulties to the peculiar disadvantages of the place they were settled in ; and if, under this impression, they had become disgusted, as might naturally have happened, the experiment, instead of tending to divert the current of emigration, would have had an opposite effect.

There cannot be a more extreme contrast to any old cultivated country, or a scene more totally new to a native of these kingdoms, than the boundless forests of America. An emigrant set down in such a scene feels the helplessness almost of a child. He has a new set of ideas to acquire : the knowledge which all his previous experience has accumulated, can seldom be applied ;

his ignorance as to the circumstances of his new situation meets him on every occasion. The disadvantages to which he is thereby subjected are such, that emigrants who are taken at once from Europe to such a situation, and abandoned to their own exertions without aid or guidance, can scarcely fail to involve themselves in inextricable difficulties. To settlers of this description, success can be insured only by well calculated arrangements, and an unremitting attention in directing their efforts.

A detached and unsupported settler is liable, in the first place, to lose a great deal of time before he fixes on a situation. Unskilled in those indications by which the nature of the soil in the forests is to be judged of, he wanders about with all the jealousy which conscious ignorance inspires. His vague researches terminate probably in a choice made at random; in the mean while, he has not only lost his time, but his ideas have become unsettled. He will again, perhaps, take a dislike to the place he has chosen, and, by repeated changes, sustain

more loss than if he had begun at hazard on the most barren and unfavourable spot he met with.



Those whose interests have been intrusted to the care of their superiors, have not always fared much better in this respect. A gentleman, who had accompanied a party of emigrants to Cape Breton in 1802, informed me, that, on their arrival, a situation was pointed out to them where they might have grants. Comparing the land with that they had left, they were delighted with it, and were inclined to settle immediately. Another place, however, was shown to them, and they were allowed to choose. This situation was still more agreeable to them; but before they could make their determination they heard of another that was yet finer, and proceeded to view it. Here, again, they found that they were at no great distance from some relations who had formerly settled in Nova Scotia. Having found every new situation better than the former; and, concluding that their friends must have chosen the best of all, they determined to join

them. They proceeded therefore, with all their families and their baggage, to that settlement, where they found that all the best situations were taken up. They would willingly have returned, but had incurred so much expense, as well as loss of time, that they were under the necessity of remaining upon inferior land, with diminished resources.

Those who receive gratuitous grants of land are often subjected to delays, which more than counterbalance all the advantage. The Loyalists who were brought, at the end of the American war, to Nova Scotia, had to wait above a year, some of them nearly two, before the surveyors had completed their work, and their allotments were pointed out to them. In Upper Canada, I met with some emigrants who had left Scotland about two years before. On their arrival in that province, they had received a promise of grants of Crown lands, for which (though every disposition to accommodate them had been shown by the officers of Government) they had till then been waiting, and not till

then had they received possession. In the interval, most of the money they had brought with them was expended, and, in this exhausted condition, they were beginning the cultivation of their own property.



When the new settler is fixed on his land, his difficulties are not at an end: he is still exposed to much waste of time, and can seldom proceed in his work without interruption. He must first procure provisions; and though no pecuniary difficulty should occur, he generally, from his ignorance of the country, loses more time than necessary in this business. In bringing them home, he often finds himself much at a loss, from the wild and almost impassable state of the roads through woods; the same difficulty occurs whenever any article, however inconsiderable, is wanted from the mill, the forge, or the store. From the want of a general attention to keep the settlements compact, and within reach of mutual assistance, most of the people who begin on new and untouched land, are reduced to a situa-

tion of more than savage solitude. The new settler from Europe is unacquainted with the methods by which a practised *woodsman* can find his way through the trackless forest. Every time he leaves his hut, he is exposed to the danger of being bewildered and lost; if he has been sufficiently warned of this danger, to teach him the requisite degree of attention, still he can feel no confidence that his children will have the same caution; and must still shudder when he thinks of the howling wilderness that surrounds him. The horror of these impressions has, in many instances, completely unnerved the mind of the settler, and rendered him incapable of every vigorous exertion.

But, though his mental energy should remain unimpaired, the practical difficulties that await him are sufficient to discourage the most hardy. In every work he has to perform he is unpractised, and has all the awkwardness of a novice. The settler who begins on new lands has little access to the assistance of professed artificers. He must build his own house, construct his own cart,

make almost all his own implements. Amidst the variety of these operations, to which a European is unaccustomed, it is well if he be not often totally at a loss, and unable to proceed. Winter may overtake him with his house unfinished, or, when completed, he may find it insufficient to resist the rigours of the season, and to preserve him from the loss of health. If illness attack him in his solitary residence, remote from medical assistance, his deplorable situation may easily be imagined. If, however, he escape this disaster, and proceed with industry to clear his land, this work, on which all his hopes must be founded, is so new to him, that it must be expected to advance with a discouraging degree of slowness. His awkwardness, too, exposes him to frequent accidents: the falling of the trees, which an experienced *axe-man* regulates with almost mathematical precision, often takes a novice by surprise; and it is no rare occurrence that he is severely wounded in the course of his work. If he escape unhurt, he will probably, as the reward of a great deal of severe labour, have but a small spot of land cleared in the course

of many months, perhaps not the fourth part of what a man accustomed to the business might have accomplished with less exertion. To cut down the trees is but half the work ; in destroying them, and preparing the land for the seed, a number of minutiae must be attended to ; if, from want of experience, these are omitted, the consequence may be fatal to the crop. The seasons of sowing, and many details in the management of unknown kinds of grain, are all to be learnt. Thus, over and above the danger of losing his seed-time altogether, by not having his land ready, independently of the accidents of seasons to which all are subject, the new settler has to add many chances that, from his own ignorance and mismanagement, his crop may totally fail.

All these disasters are within the bounds of probability, though the settler should be in no degree deficient in exertion ; but, in the management of a number of people, it is a matter of much delicacy to keep alive their industry, and seldom in any great undertaking has this been fully accomplished.

In such instances as New South Wales, where the progress of the colony depended on men who had no interest in their own work, it is easy to anticipate the consequence. But even where the settlers are to reap the entire benefit of their own industry, circumstances, apparently inconsiderable, may tend to diminish their energy. When, to obviate the disadvantages of a new situation, assistance has been granted with a liberal hand, particularly when gratuitous rations of provisions have been allowed, the effect has almost invariably been, by taking away the pressure of necessity, to render the settlers inactive, and to damp their exertions for overcoming the difficulties of their situation. A great proportion of the Loyalists and disbanded Provincials in Canada and Nova Scotia performed scarcely any work as long as they received Government rations; and, when these were discontinued, found themselves almost as destitute as if no aid had ever been given. The Maroon settlement near Halifax was totally ruined by mismanagement of the same kind.

The industry of new settlers has likewise been often damped by injudicious regulations as to the disposal of land. Some grantees of large tracts in America, have attempted to settle these with people holding their farms on lease, like the tenantry of Europe. Experience has proved, that this is impracticable within the reach of other places where land may, for a low price, be had in absolute property. At any rate, the people who begin a new settlement, ought to have every stimulus to exertion which the most permanent tenure can afford. But the opposite extreme has also its dangers; the profusion with which gratuitous grants of Crown lands have been given in some situations, has been scarcely less pernicious. It has taught the settlers to despise what they procured with so little difficulty; and, by diminishing their estimation of the spot on which they were fixed, and their attachment to it, has tended to enfeeble their exertions for its improvement.

The combined effect of these accumulated difficulties is seen in the long infancy of most



new settled countries. Till the colonists, from their own lands, and the produce of their own labour, reap a harvest adequate to their maintenance, they cannot be considered as fairly established. In most instances of the kind, there has been a long and critical period of dependance on extraneous and precarious supplies. I do not refer to the first establishments which were made on the continent of America, at a period when little experience had been obtained on the subject of colonization, and the principles, on which a new establishment ought to be conducted, were perhaps unknown. But so lately as the year 1783, when the Loyalists were settled in Nova Scotia and Canada, it was not supposed that they could provide for themselves in less than three years: a great proportion did not accomplish it even in this period; and when the bountiful support of Government was discontinued, many of the settlements were abandoned. The colony in New South Wales was for six or seven years dependant on imported provisions; and, during all that time, was in hazard of famine, whenever a store-ship was unexpectedly re-

tarded. The very island where I have fixed the emigrants I have mentioned above, affords an instance in point : on its settlement, about the year 1770, many farmers were brought from Europe, who, after being supported for two years by extraneous supplies, went away in disgust, spreading the idea that the country was incapable of cultivation.

I will not assert that the people I took there have totally escaped all difficulties and discouragement ; but the arrangements for their accommodation have had so much success, that few perhaps in their situation have suffered less, or have seen their difficulties so soon at an end.

This island of Prince Edward is situated in lat. 46° and 47° in the Gulph of St. Lawrence, near the coast of Nova Scotia,—it is about 120 miles long, and much intersected by arms of the sea, along which is a thinly scattered population, estimated at about 7 or 8000. The lands of this island were granted — in the year 1767, in several large lots, of which a great proportion fell into the hands



of persons who have entirely neglected their improvement, and in consequence of this many very extensive tracts are totally uninhabited. The settlement I had in view was to be fixed in one of these, where, for upwards of 30 miles along the coast, there was not a single habitation. The spot selected for the principal establishment was separated by an arm of the sea, and an interval of several miles, from any older settlement. Those that were in the vicinity were of inconsiderable amount, and little benefit was derived from any intercourse with them; so that the emigrants who arrived on this occasion were placed in circumstances scarcely more favourable than if the island had been completely desert.

These people, amounting to about 800 persons of all ages, reached the island in three ships, on the 7th, 9th, and 27th of August 1803. It had been my intention to come to the island some time before any of the settlers, in order that every requisite preparation might be made. In this, however, a number of untoward circum-

stances concurred to disappoint me ; and on my arrival at the capital of the island, I learned that the ship of most importance had just arrived, and the passengers were landing at a place previously appointed for the purpose.

I lost no time in proceeding to the spot, where I found that the people had already lodged themselves in temporary *wigwams*, constructed after the fashion of the Indians, by setting up a number of poles in a conical form, tied together at top, and covered with boughs of trees. Those of the spruce fir were preferred, and, when disposed in regular layers of sufficient thickness, formed a very substantial thatch, giving a shelter not inferior to that of a tent.

The settlers had spread themselves along the shore for the distance of about half a mile, upon the site of an old French village, which had been destroyed and abandoned after the capture of the island by the British forces in 1758. The land, which had formerly been cleared of wood, was overgrown

again with thickets of young trees, interspersed with grassy glades. These open spots, though of inconsiderable extent with a view to cultivation, afforded a convenient situation for the encampment: indeed the only convenient place that could have been found, for all the rest of the coast was covered with thick wood, to the very edge of the water.



I arrived at the place late in the evening, and it had then a very striking appearance. Each family had kindled a large fire near their *wigwam*, and round these were assembled groupes of figures, whose peculiar national dress added to the singularity of the surrounding scene. Confused heaps of baggage were every where piled together beside their wild habitations; and by the number of fires the whole woods were illuminated. At the end of this line of encampment I pitched my own tent, and was surrounded in the morning by a numerous assemblage of people, whose behaviour indicated that they looked to nothing less than a restoration of the happy days of Clanship.

After our first meeting, I had to occupy myself in examining the lands, and laying them out in small lots for the settlers. In this business I soon began to feel the inconvenience of not having arrived at the time I had intended. The plans which had formerly been made of the land, were too inaccurate to be of much use: a new survey could not be completed sufficiently soon; but some measurements were indispensable; and even this little took up time that could ill be spared. From this cause, combined with some of those errors from which a first experiment is rarely exempt, it happened that three or four weeks elapsed before the settlers could have their individual allotments pointed out to them; and during all this time they were under the necessity of remaining in their first encampment.

These hardy people thought little of the inconvenience they felt from the slightness of the shelter they had put up for themselves; but in other respects the delay was of very pernicious tendency. There are few parts of America where there are not people ready



to practise on the ignorance of new-comers, and by representations, true or false, to entice them to fix on some place where the officious adviser has an interest to promote. Some attempts of this kind were made, and, though not ultimately successful, gave much trouble. The confidence of the settlers seemed to be shaken; and from their absolute ignorance of the country, argument had no effect in removing any unreasonable fancy. The terms upon which lands were offered to them were scarcely equivalent to one-half of the current rate of the island; yet they acceded to them with much hesitation, and a long time elapsed before they became sensible of the uncommon degree of favour they had experienced.

At one period, indeed, there seemed to be a probability of the settlement breaking up entirely. As long as the people remained together in their encampment, they partook in some degree of the versatility of a mob. It was not till they had dispersed to their separate lots, till by working upon them they had begun to form a local attachment,

and to view their property with a sort of paternal fondness, that I could reckon the settlement as fairly begun.

In this interval an alarming contagious fever broke out, and gave me no small degree of anxiety, by its progress among the settlers. My apprehensions, however, were relieved by the presence and assistance of a medical gentleman, whom I was fortunate enough to have as my companion, and whose professional skill was equalled only by his amiable and humane attention to every class of patients *. Through his assiduous and unremitted exertions, the disease was soon alleviated; and few fatal cases occurred. There were not many of the settlers, however, that escaped the contagion altogether: it was difficult to intercept it among people living in such close vicinity, and in a continual intercourse, which no means could be found for preventing. This fever had been occasioned by some accidental importation, and certainly not by the

* Dr. John Shaw, jun. now at Annapolis, in Maryland.

climate, which is remarkably healthy. The disease was nearly eradicated, when the people began to disperse to their separate lots, upon which they had all begun to work before the middle of September.



I could not but regret the time which had been lost ; but I had satisfaction in reflecting, that the settlers had begun the cultivation of their farms, with their little capitals unimpaired. The principal expense they had to incur was for provisions to support them during the winter and ensuing season ; besides which, all the more opulent purchased milch cows, and some other cattle.

Provisions, adequate to the whole demand, were purchased by an agent ; he procured some cattle for beef in distant parts of the island, and also a large quantity of potatoes, which were brought by water carriage into the centre of the settlement ; and each family received their share within a short distance of their own residence. Some difficulties occurred, indeed, in procuring a full supply ; for, though the

crops of the island afforded a great superabundance, most of the farmers who could spare any considerable quantity, had taken up the idea, that, from so large an additional number of consumers, they could get what prices they pleased, and raised their demands to such an extravagant degree, that it would have been better if the whole provisions for the settlement had been imported from a distant market. In fact, it was found necessary to send to Nova Scotia for a quantity of flour. Throughout this business some trouble was unavoidable; but of this the settlers in general had no share. From the moment they were fixed in their respective allotments of land, they were enabled to proceed without interruption in their work.

A gentleman of medical knowledge, who had accompanied the emigrants, and assisted in the management of the undertaking, settled among them in a central situation, from whence his professional aid could soon be afforded to any part. Not very far from the same place, a forge was erected; a

blacksmith was the only artificer who was judged to be indispensably requisite; for, in consequence of the small progress of the division of labour among the Highlanders, every man is in the habit of doing for himself most of the other branches of work, for which the aid of a professed tradesman would be required by people more accustomed to the habits of commercial society.

To obviate the terrors which the woods were calculated to inspire, the settlement was not dispersed, as those of the Americans usually are, over a large tract of country, but concentrated within a moderate space. The lots were laid out in such a manner, that there were generally four or five families, and sometimes more, who built their houses in a little knot together; the distance between the adjacent hamlets seldom exceeded a mile. Each of them was inhabited by persons nearly related, who sometimes carried on their work in common, or, at least, were always at hand to come to each other's assistance. This enabled them

to proceed with the more vigour, as there are many occasions, in the work of clearing away the woods, where the joint efforts of a number of men are requisite, and where a single individual can scarcely make any progress. There is a great advantage in clearing a considerable field, rather than the same extent of land in detached spots, as it does not suffer so much from the shadow of the surrounding woods. Besides this, the work of several men being collected in one place, made so much the greater show. The progress of each, insulated by itself, might have appeared poor and insignificant; but when united, when the forests were seen receding on every side, all were animated by the encouraging prospect of advancement. Experience, too, was rapidly communicated among people thus concentrated; emulation was kept alive; and, when any one was inclined to despondency, the example and society of his friends kept up his spirits. To their families, this social style of settlement was a comfort of the utmost importance for cheering their minds, and preventing them from



sinking under the gloomy impressions of the wilderness.



This plan was the more readily acquiesced in, from its similarity to the former situation of the small tenants in their native country; and, in many instances, a party of relations were willing even to take all their land in one large lot in partnership. This, as a sociable arrangement, I was disposed to encourage: it was found, however, to lead to much trouble in the subsequent stages of the business, as the partners soon began to wish for a subdivision, and this was seldom accomplished without a good deal of wrangling. The advantage of concentrating the settlements might have been attained without incurring this inconvenience, and is of such essential consequence to people who are unaccustomed to the woods, that it ought not to be given up for any motive of inconsiderable moment.

Before the settlers had dispersed to their several lots, while they were still in the encampment which they had formed on landing,

some of the inhabitants of the island were employed to build a house, so that all had access to learn the methods used: some land was afterwards cleared in a situation they had frequent opportunities of seeing. From these examples they appeared to receive no small instruction; for, though their first trials of the axe were awkward, they improved rapidly.

Their houses were, indeed, extremely rude, and such as, perhaps, few other European settlers would have been satisfied with. The first buildings of the American *woodsmen*, from which our people took their model, are constructed without any other materials than what the forests afford. The walls are formed of straight logs, about eight inches in diameter, rough and undressed, laid horizontally, and crossing each other at the corners of the building, where they are coarsely grooved or notched about half through, to allow each log to touch that immediately below it: the chinks between them are stuffed with moss, clay, and small wedges of wood. The roof is formed of birch bark, or that of



the spruce fir, peeled off the trees in large unbroken pieces, and secured by poles tied down on them with wythes or pliable twigs. This covering, if well laid, is sufficient to keep out any rain, but must be protected from the sun by a covering of thatch; for which purpose aquatic grasses, or the small twigs of the spruce and other sorts of fir trees, may be used. Houses of this kind, of fifteen or eighteen feet, by ten or fourteen, were the dwellings of many of the settlers for the first season.

The hardy habits of these Highlanders gave them, in this respect, a great advantage over people who are accustomed to better accommodation, and who would have employed a great proportion of their time in building comfortable houses. They, on the contrary, had soon secured themselves a shelter, poor indeed in appearance, and of narrow dimensions, but such as they could put up with for a temporary resource; and immediately applied themselves with vigour to the essential object of clearing their lands. Notwithstanding this work was

of a nature so totally new to them, they applied to it with such assiduity, that before the winter set in, they had not only lodged themselves, but made some progress in cutting down the trees. This was continued during winter, whenever the weather was not too severe ; and, upon the opening of the spring, the land was finally prepared for the seed.

The zeal with which they proceeded in their work, was exemplified by a man of above sixty years of age, who with his three sons inhabited one of the little hamlets that have been described. The young men had agreed among themselves, that as this new species of labour would be too severe for their father, he should do nothing, till, from the progress of the clearing, he could employ himself in some sort of work he had formerly been accustomed to : the veteran would not, however, be dissuaded from taking up the axe, till his sons found they had no resource but to secrete it from him. In another instance, this zeal appeared rather in a whimsical manner. In walking among the settlements, I came unexpectedly to a





house newly erected by an elderly widow and her two sons. The young men had gone from home upon some business ; the mother, having no immediate occupation within the house, had taken up one of the axes they had left behind, and with amazonian vigour had begun to attack a tree. She had made some progress, when my coming up interrupted the work—rather fortunately, I believe ; for the good old lady had proceeded with more ardour than skill, and there appeared to be some danger that, in the progress of her work, the tree would have fallen on the roof of her new habitation.

The settlers had every incitement to vigorous exertion from the nature of their tenures. They were allowed to purchase in fee simple, and to a certain extent, on credit : from 50 to 100 acres were allotted to each family at a very moderate price, but none was given gratuitously. To accommodate those who had no superfluity of capital, they were not required to pay the price in full till the third or fourth year of their possession ; and, in this time, an industrious man may have it

in his power to discharge his debt out of the produce of the land itself.

The same principle was adhered to in the distribution of provisions ; for though several of the poorer settlers could not go on without support, every assistance they received was as a loan, after due scrutiny into the necessity of the case, and under strict obligations of repayment with interest. Thus, while a remedy was provided for cases of such extreme necessity as might otherwise have put a stop to the progress of the settlers, they were not encouraged to reliance on any resource but their own industry ; and their minds were not degraded by the humiliating idea of receiving any thing like charity. The proud spirit that characterized the ancient Highlander, was carefully cherished among them : the near prospect of independence was kept constantly within their view, to stimulate their exertions, and support them in every difficulty.

Having calculated the arrangements necessary for the progress of the settlement,

and having left the charge of their execution in the hands of an agent, whose fidelity and zeal I was well assured of by long previous acquaintance, I left the island in September, 1803; and, after an extensive tour on the continent, returned in the end of the same month the following year. It was with the utmost satisfaction I then found that my plans had been followed up with attention and judgment. Though circumstances had intervened to disturb, in some degree, the harmony of the settlement, they had produced no essentially bad effect; and the progress that had been made was so satisfactory to all concerned, that little difficulty occurred in healing every sore.

I found the settlers engaged in securing the harvest which their industry had produced. They had a small proportion of grain of various kinds, but potatoes were the principal crop; these were of excellent quality, and would have been alone sufficient for the entire support of the settlement. The prospect of abundance had diffused universal satisfaction, and every doubt as to

the eligibility of the situation seemed to be removed. In the whole settlement I met but two men who showed the least appearance of despondency. There were three or four families who had not gathered a crop adequate to their own supply: but many others had a considerable superabundance. The extent of land in cultivation at the different hamlets, I found to be in general in a proportion of two acres or thereabouts to each able working hand: in many cases from three to four. Several boats had also been built, by means of which, a considerable supply of fish had been obtained, and formed no trifling addition to the stock of provisions. Thus, in little more than one year from the date of their landing on the island, had these people made themselves independent of any supply that did not arise from their own labour.

To their industrious dispositions and persevering energy, the highest praise is justly due. Without these, indeed, every other advantage would have been of no avail; for, if the arrangements that have been de-

tailed have any merit, it may all be comprised in this,—that by their means the industry of the individual settlers was preserved unimpaired, was allowed full scope to exert itself, and was so directed, as to produce all the effect, or nearly all, that it could produce.

These first difficulties being over, the further progress of the colonists may be left to their own guidance. They are now acquainted with the essential circumstances of the country, and understand how to improve their situation: their future condition must entirely depend on the perseverance with which their first exertions are followed up.

Having secured the first great object, subsistence, most of them are now proceeding to improve their habitations, and some are already lodged in a manner superior to the utmost wishes they would have formed in their native country. These second houses are constructed in the same general methods as their first huts, but in a more

careful manner. The logs are partly squared, and well fitted together ; they are supported on a foundation of stone ; for the roof, boards or shingles take the place of bark and thatch ; a wooden floor is introduced ; the doors and windows, the chimney and partitions, are all executed with more care ; and some attention is bestowed on neatness and ornament. This last circumstance, though it may be deemed of inferior consequence, is a very pleasing indication of a progress in the ideas of the people as to comfort, and of the attachment they have taken to the spot that is to be the inheritance of their children.

The commencement of improvement to be seen in some of these habitations, is, I believe, the result, not so much of a personal wish for better accommodation, as of the pride of landed property ; a feeling natural to the human breast, and particularly consonant to the antient habits of the Highlanders ; a feeling which, among the tenantry, has been repressed by recent circumstances, but not extinguished ; and which is ready to resume its spring whenever their situation

will permit. These sentiments are not confined to the superior classes of the settlers. One of very moderate property, who had held a small possession in the Isle of Sky, traces his lineage to a family which had once possessed an estate in Ross-shire but had lost it in the turbulence of the feudal times. He has given to his new property the name of the antient seat of his family; has selected a situation with more taste than might have been expected from a mere peasant; and, to render the house of Auchtertyre worthy of its name, is doing more than would otherwise have been thought of by a man of his station.

The point, however, on which the opulence and comfort of a settler ultimately depend, is chiefly the assiduity with which he proceeds in clearing away the woods and extending his cultivated land. It is observed of some Highlanders who have come on former occasions to this island, that after the first two or three years their exertions have relaxed. They have, by that time, found themselves able to maintain

their families with ease, and to procure all the comforts they had been accustomed to ; and, having no further ambition, have preferred the indulgence of their old habits of indolence, to an accumulation of property by a continuance of active industry. There is reason, however, to doubt, whether this has not been more the effect of an insecure or discouraging tenure, than of any inherent disposition.

This effect has certainly been aggravated in no small degree, by the unsystematic manner in which the inhabitants of the island have been allowed to scatter around it. They have settled, with few exceptions, on the sea-shores only, in spots abounding with coarse hay produced on marshes occasionally overflowed by the tide. These are a great convenience to a new settler, by furnishing an immediate maintenance for cattle ; but are observed, in many other situations, as well as in this island, to be a great impediment to industry. They tempt the settler to keep a greater number of cattle than he can provide for in a proper manner, or turn

to real advantage. These cattle must be allowed to range in the woods; and the attention required in looking after them, is a serious interruption to the progress of laborious work, as well as to the habits of steady application, which the circumstances of a new settler require. The most important part of the season too, is taken up in cutting, preparing, and bringing home the hay; while those improvements must be neglected, which would not only give the immediate return of a crop, but create a permanent acquisition of productive land.

Notwithstanding these pernicious effects of the too great abundance of marsh hay, a small quantity is of great importance to a new settler during the first two or three years, till by the progress of his cultivation he can provide winter forage independently of this resource. With a view to preserve this advantage for future settlers, as well as to obviate the bad effects that have arisen in other cases, the marshes on this tract were not annexed entirely to the adjoining lands, as is usual in the island. Each lot of wood-

land had assigned to it only a small portion of marsh, not of sufficient extent to be a permanent dependance, or to supersede the necessity of going on with improvements.

The prevailing soil of Prince Edward's Island may be described as a sandy loam, such as in England would be reckoned of medium quality. In some spots on the coast, it seems a mere barren sand; yet the crops in these places are generally much better than a stranger would expect from the appearance of the soil. It is a remarkable fact, that the land immediately adjoining the coast and rivers, is almost without exception, worse than that which lies further back, even at a short distance. The country in its natural state is entirely covered with timber; with the exception only of the salt-marshes, which form but a small portion. The most common species of timber are beech and maple, among which are frequently intermixed birch of different kinds, spruce firs, and other species of the pine tribe. In some places the pines entirely predominate: this is considered as indicating a soil of an



inferior quality : but, on the other hand, the timber of the white pine is valuable for exportation. The black birch is also in great estimation. Some of the many varieties of maple are valuable and beautiful timber, but these are not in so great abundance.



The mode in which the woods are cleared away is a matter of surprise to the European, who has been accustomed to consider timber as an article of value. The extent of land which an industrious man may annually bring into cultivation, furnishes a quantity far beyond the consumption of any settler for fuel and other purposes. A small proportion only is fit for exportation ; the rest must be destroyed by fire, and the ashes serve as manure.

The brush-wood, with which the forests generally abound, is first cut close to the surface, to allow the workman free access ; he then begins at one side of a piece of land, and fells the trees in a regular progress. By making his cut on the two opposite sides of the tree only, he can regulate the direc-

tion in which it is to fall, and generally lays it towards the quarter where he began. The stumps are left about three feet high; the timber is left till the proper season arrives, when fire is applied, and runs over the whole field, burning not only the branches, but the vegetation on the ground, and leaving the whole surface, to appearance, charred. This first fire is not of sufficient intensity to consume the larger branches; these must be cut off, and the trees cut across into logs of 12 or 15 feet long, which are rolled together, piled up and again set on fire. When the timber is of great size, oxen are used for dragging the logs together; but their assistance is not in general necessary on this island.

An expert workman will be employed for six or eight days in cutting down and cross-cutting the trees of an acre of land; to pile and burn them requires about as much more labour: the whole work may be executed for three guineas or three and a half per acre, at the usual rate of wages in the island.

After the timber is burnt, little more remains to be done : the fire has destroyed the vegetation which might have been inconvenient, and the surface, having been preserved in a mellow state by the shade of the trees, needs no tillage, further than to cover the seed with a hoe. In some parts of America, the harrow is used ; but, in all the northern parts, the surface is too rough, owing to trees that have been blown down by storms, and have torn up the earth along with their roots, forming little hillocks, which remain long after the timber is entirely gone to decay.

With this slight preparation of the soil any kind of grain may be produced ; or, if potatoes are planted, the digging up of these roots is sufficient tillage for a crop of grain the second year. After this, all judicious farmers leave the land in grass till the roots of the trees decay. In the beech and maple lands, the stumps may be pulled out with little difficulty after five or six years ; if left a year or two longer, they come out with perfect ease. Where the timber consists of pine, the decay is much more tedious.

When the stumps are removed, the plough may be used, though for the first or second time with some difficulty, from the roughness of the surface, and the remnants of decayed roots. After that, however, a farmer may follow the same agricultural process as in England, and, according to his management, may expect nearly the same produce as on a similar soil in this country.

The first crop or two upon newly cleared land, are of course much inferior to those of England. But without any other manure than the ashes of the burnt timber, an acre may easily be made to produce 150 or 160 bushels of potatoes, and 200 is not an extraordinary produce. In the same rough state of the land, the usual produce of grain is about 15 or 16 bushels of wheat, and 20 or 25 of barley or oats. From 10 cwt. to a ton, of timothy or clover hay, may be expected, if grass seeds are sown; but this is not usually practised in the early stage of clearing. When the clearing is completed, the land may easily be brought, by tolerable cultivation, to produce crops of double the



amount that can be raised in the first instance. But it must be allowed, that the settlers who manage their land with sufficient judgment form a very small proportion.



The quantity of land which may be brought into cultivation annually from the forest, varies with the dexterity of the workman, as well as the size of the timber: that of the island is seldom so heavy as in the more southern parts of America, where one man has frequently cleared ten acres in the course of a year, besides the other work of his farm. This, however, is a great exertion. In this island six or seven acres may in general be accomplished by an industrious settler, though not more expert at the axe than any active man may become in the course of two or three years' practice. A perfect novice could not do so much; but any one who does not accomplish two or three acres, must either be a very indifferent hand, or deficient in industry.

The climate is not capable of ripening Indian corn with certainty; but every article

that comes to maturity in England seems in Prince Edward's Island to reach as great perfection as can be expected from the slight and careless culture generally bestowed. The summer is rather warmer than that of England; the winter longer; but in severity not perhaps very different from that of the Netherlands. The cattle are often left to support themselves in the woods during the early part of winter; but, on the whole, from 1 to 1½ ton of hay to each is considered as requisite for wintering. In summer, the cattle find abundance of food in the woods, sufficient at least for the young stock; but the settlers are too much in the habit of allowing those of all descriptions to take their chance alike. The consequence is, that the produce of the dairy is inconsiderable, and that the full aged cattle are not well fattened. The few who pay more attention, find their advantage in providing better pasture for their cows and feeding cattle. The sheep are more generally kept in inclosed pastures, as they cannot, without danger, be allowed to go into the woods.

These particulars may be sufficient to enable the intelligent agriculturist to form an estimate of the circumstances and ultimate situation to which any emigrant may probably attain, according to the degree of his industry.



The advancement already gained by the settlers, whose progress I have more particularly described, has been spoken of above as uncommon. This, however, is not to be understood as in comparison with that which might have been made in the same circumstances by natives of America. It is by no means unusual among settlers of that description, that the first crop they reap, after beginning to clear a new farm, is more than sufficient for the support of a family and for maintaining them in a degree of luxury, which to the Scottish peasantry would appear absolute extravagance. But the Americans have a great advantage, in their perfect acquaintance with the woods, and in the dexterity which continual practice has given them in the use of the axe. No comparison can be stated between their case, and that of men

who from a country where they had scarcely ever seen a tree, were taken at once to a situation, where they could with difficulty find room even to place their huts till they had cleared away the wood.

These people could not, perhaps, have attained a state of independence so soon, but for a combination of advantages rarely enjoyed by European emigrants. Their industry, with all the arrangements for giving it effect, would not have been sufficient, if their habits had been less hardy, or their ideas of the necessities of life less moderate. So many instances indeed are quoted of the ill success of Europeans when placed at once in the heart of the wild woods, that I have heard several gentlemen of the highest abilities and experience in the United States, pronounce an unqualified opinion, that a new settlement could not be formed without a basis of native Americans.

The decisive experimental proof to the contrary that has been stated in these pages, seems to me of some consequence in a



public point of view. It shows the utility that may be derived from a class of people who have hitherto been lost to their native country, and abandoned to their fate in a foreign land. Though of little service as manufacturers, it proves that they may be made excellent colonists; and that our North American possessions may be peopled and brought into cultivation, without introducing into them men whose manners and principles are so repugnant to our own constitution and government, as those which are prevalent among the natives of the United States.

Of the possibility of inducing the Highlanders to go to our own colonies, I presume that no further doubt can be entertained; and I cannot help flattering myself that no immaterial progress has already been made towards this object. In some considerable districts, the current appears already to be decidedly turned. How far the example of these may operate on other parts of the country, time only can show; but it can scarcely admit of a doubt, that some further

exertion in the same line might secure to our own colonies, all those among our countrymen who cannot be retained in the kingdom.

This, however, is an object which cannot be accomplished by the unsupported exertions of any individual. The experiment that has been detailed may perhaps be useful as a preparatory step, and serve to point out the principles on which effectual national measures might be grounded—measures which, if followed up on an extensive scale while the object is within our reach, might secure to the empire most important advantages. Whether these are to be sacrificed from a deference to the prejudices of individuals, or to be attained by an adequate and timely effort, must rest with those to whom the interests of the nation are more particularly intrusted.



APPENDIX.

[A.], *page 13.*

It appears from the State Trials held after the suppression of the rebellion in 1715, that the earl of Winton, whose estate in Lothian stood among the first in the list of forfeitures, had joined the rebel army with fourteen men: Highland chieftains even of middling rank had on the same occasion brought along with them three, four, or five hundred. In like manner in the year 1745 the military force of the rebels was entirely raised by the Highland proprietors, though of the estates forfeited on that occasion those in the Lowlands were at least one half of the value. Pennant mentions this, and at the same time observes the small amount of the whole.—‘ The power and ‘ interest,’ he says, ‘ of poor twelve thousand per annum ‘ terrified and nearly subverted the constitution of these ‘ powerful kingdoms.’

Of the estates to which he alludes, those in the Highlands may now be valued at about 80,000*l.* a year, including two or three which escaped forfeiture from accidental circumstances, though the proprietors were engaged in the rebellion. The military force of the rebels appears never to have exceeded five thousand men. There are various documents, partly traditional, which ascertain the number of men which particular chiefs could bring out previous to that æra; and on comparing them with the present value of their estates, the proportion appears to be in general between ten and fifteen pounds for every man.

This sum is not far from the yearly expense of a farm-

servant in the North of Scotland. In the Agricultural Survey of the Northern Counties drawn up in 1793, for the Board of Agriculture, the total expense of wages and maintenance for an able-bodied workman is computed at 9l. 10s. for the whole year. Since the date of that publication some advance has taken place; to what exact amount I am not informed, but probably about 25 or 30 per cent.

[B.], *page 20.*

To those who are not familiar with the antient history of Scotland, these observations on the former state of the Highlands will be illustrated by a reference to Buchanan's History of the Feuds and Conflicts of the Clans, to Martin's History of the Western Isles, and to Mr. Home's History of the Rebellion in 1745, particularly the introductory chapters: many anecdotes are also interspersed through Pennant's Tours. These books being in general circulation, particular quotations are unnecessary; but the inquisitive reader may be glad to see a few passages from some publications of the period referred to, and which are not so generally known.

In a pamphlet published immediately after the suppression of the rebellion in 1745, entitled "Superiorities displayed, or Scotland's Grievance by reason of the Slavish Dependence of the People upon their Great Men," is the following passage:

' With respect to this and other depredations committed by the Highlanders, the first parliament after the Revolution sent up their grievances to king William, desiring a redress of them; whereof this was one:—
' That an effectual course may be taken to repress the depredations and robberies committed by the High-

“landers.” See Act 18, anno 1689. The king’s instruction to the duke of Hamilton, commissioner to the parliament, was in these words, “You are to endeavour to procure an act for an effectual course, to repress the depredations and robberies by the Highland clans; and when this matter is digested, you are to transmit the proposals to us, that you may get particular instructions thereanent.” A gentleman, in an Account of the Affairs in Scotland, printed about that time, gives us his observation upon this: it is, “That the depredations by the Highlanders are certainly a great inconvenience to the kingdom, whereby the inhabitants of the Lowlands are not only obliged to keep numbers of armed men, to watch and guard the passages and descents from the Highlands, but likewise to pay considerable compositions to these robbers, to procure their protection and assurance, which the law discharges; and this acknowledgement is called *black mail*, whereby these thieves are sustained without industry or virtue, who are *hard to be reduced or brought to justice* because of the inaccessibleness of the mountains, and that forces are not able to find subsistence there, nor march as far in two or three days in a body, as the Highlanders can do in one, and therefore the grievance is just; but there is no method proposed for accomplishing the redress: therefore the king did remit to the parliament to consider and digest effectual courses for repressing the Highlanders, which are to be transmitted to his majesty, that he may give particular instructions to his commissioner. Like as, though in the mean time the parliament did refuse to grant a supply, yet the king hath maintained a considerable army upon his own charge this summer, and hath planted some considerable garrisons *round the verge of the mountains* to secure the Lowlands; and if his majesty should with-

“ draw or disband these forces, which he hath not been enabled to pay, the Highland clans being now combined in arms and open rebellion against the government, they would quickly destroy that kingdom, and raise such a flame in England as might have fatal effects, before it could be effected.” A method for suppressing the depredations in the Highlands, was agreed to in the third session of the first parliament of king William and queen Mary, Act 4, September 10, 1690. But, so far as I can understand, it was no effectual remedy.



A very curious description of the state of the Highlands in the early part of last century is given in a book entitled, “ Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland to his Friend in London,” printed in 1754. The date of the letters however appears to have been about 1725 or 1730. Though anonymous, the internal evidence of their authenticity is so strong, as to leave no impression of doubt: and the writer (who appears to have been an officer of engineers quartered at Inverness) shows himself a man of observation and of candour. As the book is now very rare, and the account of peculiar value from being a detail of facts immediately under the eye of the writer, a large extract may not perhaps be unacceptable.

“ The Highlanders are divided into tribes, or clans, under chiefs or chieftains, as they are called in the laws of Scotland, and each clan again divided into branches, from the main stock, who have chieftains over them. These are subdivided into smaller branches of fifty or sixty men, who deduce their original from their particular chieftains; and rely upon them as their more immediate protectors and defenders.

‘ But, for better distinction, I shall use the word chief
 ‘ for the head of a whole clan; and the principal of a tribe,
 ‘ derived from him, I shall call a chieftain.

‘ The ordinary Highlanders esteem it the most sublime
 ‘ degree of virtue to love their chief, and pay him a blind
 ‘ obedience, although it be in opposition to the govern-
 ‘ ment, the laws of the kingdom, or even to the law of
 ‘ God. He is their idol; and as they profess to know no
 ‘ king but him, (I was going further) so will they say
 ‘ they ought to do whatever he commands, without in-
 ‘ quiry.

‘ Next to this love of their chief is that of the particular
 ‘ branch from whence they sprung, and in a third degree,
 ‘ to those of the whole clan or name, whom they will
 ‘ assist, right or wrong, against those of any other tribe
 ‘ with which they are at variance; to whom their enmity,
 ‘ like that of exasperated brothers, is most outrageous.”
 * * * * * *Vol. ii. p. 91. & seq.*

‘ The chief exercises an arbitrary authority over his vas-
 ‘ sals, determines all differences and disputes that happen
 ‘ among them, and levies taxes upon extraordinary occa-
 ‘ sions; such as the marriage of a daughter, building a
 ‘ house, or some pretence for his support, and the honour
 ‘ of the name. And if any one should refuse to contribute
 ‘ to the best of his ability, he is sure of severe treatment;
 ‘ and if he persisted in his obstinacy, he would be cast out
 ‘ of the tribe by general consent. But instances of this
 ‘ kind have very rarely happened.

‘ This power of the chiefs is not supported by interest
 ‘ as they are landlords, but as lineally descended from the
 ‘ old patriarchs, or fathers of the families; for they hold
 ‘ the same authority when they have lost their estates, as
 ‘ may appear from several, and particularly one, who com-
 ‘ mands in his clan, though at the same time they main-
 ‘ tain him, having nothing left of his own.

‘ On the other hand, the chief, even against the laws,
‘ is to protect his followers, as they are sometimes called,
‘ be they never so criminal.

‘ He is their leader in clan-quarrels, must free the neces-
‘ sitous from their arrears of rent ; and maintain such who
‘ by accidents are fallen to total decay.

‘ If by increase of the tribe any small farms are wanting
‘ for support of such addition, he splits others into lesser
‘ portions ; because all must be somehow provided for.
‘ And as the meanest among ’em pretend to be his relations
‘ by consanguinity, they insist upon the privilege of taking
‘ him by the hand, wherever they meet him.

‘ Concerning this last, I once saw a number of very dis-
‘ contented countenances, when a certain lord, one of the
‘ chiefs, endeavoured to evade this ceremony.

‘ It was in presence of an English gentleman in high
‘ station, from whom he would willingly have concealed
‘ the knowledge of such seeming familiarity with slaves of
‘ so wretched appearance ; and thinking it, I suppose, as
‘ a kind of contradiction to what he had often boasted at
‘ other times, viz. his despotic power in his clan.

‘ The unlimited love and obedience of the Highlanders
‘ to their chiefs, are not confined to the lower order of
‘ their followers ; but are the same with those who are
‘ near them in rank.’ * * * * * p. 94. & seq.

‘ Some of the chiefs have not only personal dislikes
‘ and enmity to each other, but there are also hereditary
‘ feuds between clan and clan ; which have been handed
‘ down from one generation to another for several ages.

‘ These quarrels descend to the meanest vassal ; and thus,
‘ sometimes, an innocent person suffers for crimes com-
‘ mitted by his tribe at a vast distance of time before his
‘ being began.

‘ When a quarrel begins in words between two High-
‘ landers of different clans, it is esteemed the very height

‘of malice and rancour, and the greatest of all provocations, to reproach one another with the vices or personal defects of their chief, which for the most part ends in wounds or death.’ * * * * * p. 100. & seq.

‘By an old Scottish law, the chief was made accountable for any depredations, or other violences committed by his clan upon the borders of the Lowlands; and in extraordinary cases he was obliged to give up his son, or some other nearest relation, as a hostage for the peaceable behaviour of his followers in that respect.

‘By this law (for I never saw the act) he must surely have had an entire command over them; at least, tacitly, or by inference understood. For how unreasonable, not to say unjust, must such a restriction have been to him, if by sanction of the same law he had not had a coercive and judicial authority over those in whose choice and power it always lay to bring punishment upon him? If he had such an absolute command over them, was it not to make of *every chief a petty prince* in his own territory, and his *followers a people* distinct and separate from all others?’ * * * * * p. 103. & seq.

‘I have heard many instances of the faithfulness of particular Highlanders to their masters, but shall relate only one; which is to me very well known.

‘At the battle of Glenshiels, in the rebellion of the year 1719, a gentleman, (George Munro of Culcairne) for whom I have a great esteem, commanded a company of Highlandmen, raised out of his father’s clan, and entertained at his own expense. There he was dangerously wounded in the thigh from a party of the rebel Highlanders, posted upon the declivity of a mountain, who kept on firing at him after he was down, according to

‘ their want of discipline, in spending much fire upon one
 ‘ single officer, which distributed among the body might
 ‘ thin the ranks of their enemy.

‘ When after he fell, and found by their behaviour they
 ‘ were resolved to dispatch him outright, he bid his ser-
 ‘ vant, who was by, get out of the danger, for he might
 ‘ lose his life, but could be of no manner of succour or ser-
 ‘ vice to him ; and only desired him, that when he returned
 ‘ home, he would let his father and his family know that
 ‘ he had not misbehaved.

‘ Hereupon the Highlander burst out into tears, and
 ‘ asking him how he thought he could leave him in that
 ‘ condition, and what they would think of him at home,
 ‘ set himself down on his hands and knees over his master,
 ‘ and received several wounds, to shield him from further
 ‘ hurt ; till one of the clan, who acted as a serjeant, with
 ‘ a small party dislodged the enemy, after having taken an
 ‘ oath upon his dirk that he would do it.

‘ This man has often waited at table, when his master
 ‘ and I dined together, but otherwise is treated more like
 ‘ a friend than a servant.’ * * * * * p. 104. & seq.

‘ The gentlemen who are near relations of the chief
 ‘ hold pretty *large farms*, if the estate will allow it, perhaps
 ‘ *twenty or thirty pounds a year*, and they again, generally,
 ‘ parcel them out to undertenants in small portions. Hence
 ‘ it comes, that by such a division of an old farm (part of
 ‘ an upper tenant’s holding) suppose, among eight per-
 ‘ sons, each of them pays an eighth part of every thing.’
 * * * * * p. 149. & seq.

‘ You will, it is likely, think it strange, that many of
 ‘ the Highland tenants are to maintain a family upon a
 ‘ farm of twelve merks, Scots, per annum, which is thirteen

‘ shillings and fourpence sterling, with, perhaps, a cow or
‘ two, or a very few sheep or goats ; but often the rent is
‘ less, and the cattle are wanting.

‘ What follows is a specimen taken out of a Highland
‘ rent-roll, and I do assure you it is genuine, and not the
‘ least by many.’

	Scots Money.	English.	BUTTER. stones, lb. oz.	OATMEAL. Bolls. B. P. Lip.	MUTTONS.
' Donald Mac Oil vic illi Challum	£3 10 4	£0 5 10½	0 3 2	0 2 1 3	½ and 1½
' Murdoch Mac illi Christ	5 17 6	0 9 9½	0 6 4	0 3 3 3	½ and 1½
' Duncan Mac illi Phadrick	7 0 6	0 12 3½	0 7 8	1 0 3 0½	½ and 1½

' I shall here give you a computation of the first article, besides which, there are seven more of the same farm and rent, as you may perceive by the fraction of a sheep in the last column.

' The money £3 10 4 Scots. = £0 5 10½ sterling.
 ' The butter, three pounds, two ounces, at 4d. per lb. 0 1 1½
 ' Oatmeal, 2 bushels, 1 peck, 3 lippys and ¼ at 6d. per peck 4 9¼ and ½
 ' Sheep, one eighth and one sixteenth, at 2s. 0 4½

' The yearly rent of the farm is £0 12 1½ and 1¼'

‘ The poverty of the tenants has rendered it customary
 ‘ for the chief, or laird, to free some of them every year
 ‘ from all arrears of rent ; this is supposed, upon an ave-
 ‘ rage, to be about one year in five of the whole estate.’
 * * * * * p. 154. & seq.

‘ When a son is born to the chief of a family, there
 ‘ generally arises a contention among the vassals, which
 ‘ of them shall have the fostering of the child, when it is
 ‘ taken from the nurse ; and by this means, such differences
 ‘ are sometimes fomented as are hardly ever after tho-
 ‘ roughly reconciled.

‘ The happy man, who succeeds in his suit, is ever after
 ‘ called the foster-father ; and his children, the foster-
 ‘ brothers and sisters of the young laird.

‘ This they reckon not only endears them to their chief,
 ‘ and greatly strengthens their interest with him, but gives
 ‘ them a great deal of consideration among their fellow-
 ‘ vassals ; and the foster-brother having the same educa-
 ‘ tion as the young chief, may, besides that, in time be-
 ‘ come his hanchman, or perhaps be promoted to that
 ‘ office under the old patriarch himself, if a vacancy should
 ‘ happen ; or otherwise, by their interest, obtain orders
 ‘ and a benefice.

‘ This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready
 ‘ upon all occasions, to venture his life, in defence of his
 ‘ master ; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat,
 ‘ at his haunch, from whence his title is derived, and
 ‘ watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his
 ‘ patron.

‘ An English officer being in company with a certain
 ‘ chieftain, and several other Highland gentlemen, near
 ‘ Killichumen, had an argument with the great man ; and
 ‘ both being well warmed with usky, at last the dispute
 ‘ grew very hot. A youth who was hanchman, not un-

‘ was sincere ; who at dinner, before a good deal of company, English as well as Scots, myself being one of the number, affirmed, that if his estate was free from incumbrances, and was none of his own, and he was then put to choose between that and the estate of the duke of Newcastle, supposing it to be thirty thousand pounds a year (as somebody said it was), he would make choice of the former, with the *following* belonging to it, before the other without it. Now his estate might be about five hundred pounds a year.’ * * * * p. 158. & seq.

‘ The tribes will not suffer strangers to settle within their precinct, or even those of another clan to enjoy any possession among them ; but will soon constrain them to quit their pretensions, by cruelty to their persons, or mischief to their cattle, or other property. Of this there happened two flagrant instances, within a few years past.

‘ The first was as follows : Gordon, laird of Glenbucket, had been invested by the D. of G. in some lands in Badenoch, by virtue, I think, of a wadset or mortgage. These lands lay among the Macphersons ; but the tenants of that name refused to pay the rent to the new landlord, or to acknowledge him as such.

‘ This refusal put him upon the means to eject them by law ; whereupon the tenants came to a resolution to put an end to his suit and new settlement, in the manner following.

‘ Five or six of them, young fellows, the sons of gentlemen, entered the door of his hut ; and in fawning words told him, they were sorry any dispute had happened. That they were then resolved to acknowledge him as their immediate landlord, and would regularly pay him their rent. At the same time they begged he would withdraw his process, and they hoped they should be agreeable to him for the future. All this while they

‘ were almost imperceptibly drawing nearer and nearer to
 ‘ his bed-side, on which he was sitting, in order to pre-
 ‘ vent his defending himself (as they knew him to be a
 ‘ man of distinguished courage), and then fell suddenly
 ‘ on him ; some cutting him with their dirks, and others
 ‘ plunging them into his body. This was perpetrated
 ‘ within sight of the barrack of Ruthven.’ *p. 170. & seq.*

‘ The other example is of a minister, who had a small
 ‘ farm assigned him, and upon his entrance to it, some of
 ‘ the clan, in the dead of the night, fired five balls through
 ‘ his hut, which all lodged in his bed ; but he happening
 ‘ to be absent that night, escaped their barbarity, but was
 ‘ forced to quit the country. Of this he made to me
 ‘ an affecting complaint.

‘ This kind of cruelty, I think, arises from their dread
 ‘ of innovations, and the notion they entertain, that they
 ‘ have a kind of hereditary right to their farms ; and
 ‘ that none of them are to be dispossessed, unless for
 ‘ some great transgression against their chief ; in which
 ‘ case every individual would consent to their expulsion.’
 * * * * * *p. 173. & seq.*

‘ The chiefs (like princes upon the continent, whose
 ‘ dominions lie contiguous) do not invade each others
 ‘ boundaries, while they are in peace and friendship with
 ‘ one another, but demand redress of wrongs ; and whoso-
 ‘ ever should do otherwise, would commit an offence in
 ‘ which every tribe is interested, besides the lasting feud it
 ‘ might create between the two neighbouring clans.’
 * * * * * *p. 176. & seq.*

This last remark is confirmed by many curious antient
 papers, in which the chiefs of different clans make
 treaties of various kinds exactly in the style of indepen-
 dent princes.

On the state of the Highlands at the period alluded to there are some valuable observations in a pamphlet published in 1748, entitled, 'A Letter to a noble Lord, containing a Plan for effectually uniting and sincerely attaching the Highlanders to the British Constitution and Revolution Settlement.' * * * * * p. 14. & seq.

'My lord, the Highlanders have been oppressed and enslaved by their chiefs, yet oppressed and enslaved after such a manner, that they have joyfully submitted to their tyrants, and gloried, nay triumphed, in their base and ignominious servitude. The large, extensive and universal *property of their chiefs*, and the *manner* in which they planted and *tenanted that property*, was indeed the cause of great influence and power on one hand, as it was of great poverty and ignorance on the other; and by this method alone the people might have been induced, through mere fear and dread, to a submission and compliance with the will and command of their lords: but, my lord, the connections prevailing there have yet a deeper and a stronger root, that of family, blood, relationship, kindred.

'The chief, who is the eldest branch of the first stock, is considered as the guardian, *protector* and father of his clan. The relationship runs from him; and is counted, through innumerable degrees, to the very remotest and lowest slave of the tribe. The blood is honourable to the last; and the meanest clown on the mountains will maintain his title of alliance at the point of his sword. In this manner, my lord, the various tribes and clans of the Highlands consider themselves as so many separate and distinct families, each family having one common interest, one great aim, one principal and ultimate end in view, which is, the honour,

‘ the dignity; the interest of the chief: and a discipline’
 ‘ suitable to these notions and principles is observed; for,
 ‘ from the earliest moments of their youth, they are in-
 ‘ structed what degree of blood and relationship they bear
 ‘ to him; informed of the honour thereby accruing to
 ‘ themselves; and taught, that all respect and veneration
 ‘ is due to him, as being the representative of that ex-
 ‘ tensive family of which themselves are but parts, and as
 ‘ being the head by which the energy, dignity and power
 ‘ of the clan is exerted and displayed. They see but every
 ‘ where an universal and constant obedience paid him, an
 ‘ obedience which all think themselves honoured in paying,
 ‘ as it is paid to their own blood, the head and fountain of
 ‘ their kindred.

‘ Habit and example fix and rivet these principles in the
 ‘ heart: and what finally cements and binds this union
 ‘ between the chief and his clan is, a maxim inva-
 ‘ riably pursued, that whoever insults or injures the
 ‘ most insignificant member of the clan; wounds the ho-
 ‘ nour and reputation of the family; insomuch that the
 ‘ chief and his whole family or clan, look upon themselves
 ‘ as most sacredly bound to revenge and wipe off every
 ‘ such injury and insult, even at the hazard and expence
 ‘ of the last drop of their blood.

‘ My lord, I hold this *system of relationship* and the
 ‘ *manner of planting the property* of the country, to be
 ‘ the principal and secret springs of all the power and in-
 ‘ fluence of the Highland chiefs, all the servitude and de-
 ‘ pendence of the people composing the Highland clans;
 ‘ and however others may overlook or despise the first of
 ‘ these, your lordship will easily perceive the difference
 ‘ between *the last exerting itself alone, and exerting itself*
 ‘ *in union with the first*: for though the last might by it-
 ‘ self have reduced the people to a state of dependence and
 ‘ servitude, yet that servitude would have been such as

‘ would have rendered the people entirely base, abject and
‘ spiritless; such are, for instance, the subjects of the
‘ Turk: and such hath been and always will be the case of
‘ every people who are ruled and governed only by the mere
‘ influence and effect of property vested in the person of
‘ one man. For in this case there is raised no generous
‘ sentiment, no natural leading, no friendly ties to quicken
‘ and accelerate the native passions and courage of a man.
‘ Nothing, my lord, prevails here, but the cruel and stu-
‘ pefying hand of irresistible power, which cramps and
‘ distorts every thing naturally good and excellent.

‘ But join this to the first, as is the case of the High-
‘ landers, and though power and oppression take place, yet
‘ it shall appear to be otherwise: for, by this combination
‘ of principles, the Highlander considers the bread he eats
‘ under his master, not as the starved fare of a tyranny,
‘ but as the natural and kind distribution and appointment
‘ of the great parent and head of his family and clan. The
‘ service and obedience required is not viewed by him as
‘ a cruel and compelled subjection to a princely stranger,
‘ whose interest and views are as infinitely removed from
‘ his, as is his royal blood and pedigree; but as the natural
‘ and necessary obedience of a child of that family, whose
‘ honour and dignity is supposed to consist in the
‘ honour and dignity of the chief, and whose own private
‘ excellence and importance is thereby presumed to grow
‘ and increase with that of his head.

‘ His spirit therefore is not broke, or rendered timid, by
‘ a constant service and submission to his lord; but enli-
‘ vened and exalted through a love of glory and desire of
‘ fame. Nor would his affection or obedience change along
‘ with the property, to a new master; as is the case in
‘ Turkey. For his natural affection would remain, when
‘ the power of the chief was gone; nay it would grow with
‘ his misfortunes, for he would consider them as the dis-
‘ grace and misfortunes of the family and of himself. I

‘ say then, my lord, that distinct from property, there is
 ‘ another cause of the extraordinary power of the chiefs,
 ‘ I mean the bond of relationship ; and as this cause is
 ‘ very strong, and can affect and influence when the other
 ‘ no more exists, it ought to be considered in a particular
 ‘ manner, in settling the future liberty of the Highlands.’



In confirmation of these observations may be quoted a remarkable anecdote of the celebrated lord Lovat, who was attainted on account of the part he took in the rebellion in 1745. It is mentioned in the *Memoirs of his Life*, published about that time, that the estate which he claimed as heir male and chief of the clan of Frasers, had fallen into the hands of a gentleman of another name, whose claim resting upon a female title was of no validity according to the established customs of clanship. From a concurrence of circumstances, however, that gentleman (Mac Kenzie of Fraserdale) had been maintained in possession for some years; till, on the breaking out of the rebellion in the year 1715, he joined the Pretender's army with five hundred men, but, says the writer of the memoirs,
 ‘ at least half that clan refused to rise, declared their true
 ‘ chief was arrived in England, and they would wait for his
 ‘ coming ; which was treated with great ridicule and con-
 ‘ tempt by Scaforth and Fraserdale, and the latter marched
 ‘ with a detachment of between six and seven hundred men
 ‘ to force them into the service, but it had a contrary effect.
 ‘ For though they did rise under the lairds of Struy and
 ‘ Foycr, yet they showed such a resolution to defend them-
 ‘ selves, that Fraserdale and his people did not think fit to
 ‘ attack them.’ * * * * *

Lord Lovat, having made his way into the country, put himself at the head of the clan ; and, from enmity against his rival, joined some other chiefs who had risen in favour of government, and gained some advantages over the adherents of the Pretender, ‘ This success however,’ pro-

ceeds the author of the Memoirs, ‘ did not satisfy lord
 ‘ Lovat; he was resolved to show his interest and power
 ‘ as a Highland chief, and therefore sent a trusty person to
 ‘ Perth, where the whole force of the rebels was assembled
 ‘ under lord Mar, to summon the Frasers under the com-
 ‘ mand of his competitor to join their lawful chief; and
 ‘ though his friends looked upon this as a very wild and
 ‘ strange attempt, yet it had all the success he could desire:
 ‘ for his clan, taking a favourable opportunity, marched
 ‘ off in a body, and actually came to Inverness and joined
 ‘ lord Lovat.’ * * * * *

The arts of popularity which were used on the other hand, by the chiefs, in order to preserve and strengthen these sentiments among their followers, have continued to affect the manners of the Highlands even till a recent date. Pennant appears to have been much struck with them. ‘ On the side of the chieftain,’ he observes, ‘ no art of affability, generosity or friendship, which could inspire love and esteem, was left untried, to secure a full and willing obedience, which strengthened the impressions of education.’ * * * *Tour through Scotland, vol. iii. p. 428.*

The manners arising from these principles have remained in vigour long after the motives which first prompted them could have no immediate influence. Those chieftains, in particular, who still cherished the antient ideas of the country and were anxious to preserve the affection of their followers, continued to behave towards them in the accustomed style of cordiality. This did not escape the observant eye of Dr. Johnson, who, in speaking of his residence at the house of Mr. Mac Lean, of Col, says, ‘ Wherever we roved, we were pleased to see the reverence with which his subjects regarded him. He did not endeavour to dazzle them by any magnificence of dress, his only distinction was a feather in his bonnet; but as soon as he appeared, they forsook their work and

‘ clustered about him : he took them by the hand and they
‘ seemed mutually delighted.’ * * * *Journey to the
Western Islands*, p. 297.

Among the numerous characteristic anecdotes which are related of the Highlanders of former times, and which show in how singular a degree they combined the most refined sentiments of fidelity and generosity, with a total disregard of what in civilized society are deemed the common principles of honesty, we may instance the well known fact related in the Statistical Account of Scotland, vol. viii. p. 359. ‘ Mac Ian, alias Kennedy, ‘ after the defeat of the unfortunate Charles Stewart, at ‘ Culloden, watched over him with inviolable fidelity for ‘ weeks, and even robbed, at the risque of his life, for his ‘ support at the very time that he himself and his family ‘ were in a state of starvation, and that he knew he ‘ could gain 30,000*l.* by betraying his guest. This poor ‘ man was afterwards executed at Inverness for stealing ‘ a cow. A little before his execution, he took off his ‘ bonnet, and thanked God that he had never betrayed ‘ his trust, never injured the poor, and never refused a ‘ share of what he had to the stranger and the needy.’

The contradiction which shows itself in this conduct is not perhaps so great as it may at first sight appear. There is no want of proof, that among the antient Highlanders it was always reckoned disgraceful to steal from one of the same clan, though they were not in the least ashamed of theft or robbery committed against distant or inimical tribes; and that every chieftain dispensed justice among his own followers with strict impartiality, though he protected them against others, however criminal in the eye of the law. In fact, the clans were little separate *nations*, and acted on a small scale, on the same principles on which we see the great kingdoms of Europe conduct themselves. Mac Ian, when he stole the cow

for which he was hanged, was no more ashamed of what he had done, than a captain in the British navy would be of having taken a Spanish galleon loaded with dollars. This circumstance of the clans being separate and distinct political communities, and the chiefs in effect petty independent princes, is the fundamental principle on which the whole of the antient state of the country essentially depended.

Here, indeed, I must observe, that in speaking of the feudal system in the Highlands, I do not use the term in the strict and technical sense in which it is understood by lawyers, but as some historians have employed it, to signify the state of society, which arose from the partial independence of the great barons, during the period when the executive government of the different kingdoms of Europe had not attained sufficient power to exercise a steady and effectual control.

The regular system of feudal tenures never was fully established in the Highlands. It was only in later times that the chieftains were induced to apply for charters from the crown, in the legal and feudal form, to corroborate the more effectual title they derived from the *right of the strongest*. Some of them even disdained to accept of such titles, and declared they would never hold their lands in a *sheep's skin*. One of considerable note (Mac Donell of Kepoch) acted on this principle down to the year 1745; and after the rebellion his lands fell into possession of another chief, who had claimed them for many ages on the ground of a charter from the crown, without ever having been able till then to make his title effectual.

From this too it appears, that the system of Heritable Jurisdictions had by no means so great an effect on the antient state of the Highlands as many have ascribed to

it. In fact, there were some chiefs who nominally held these jurisdictions over very extensive territories, but never could enforce their authority beyond the limits of their own immediate *clannish* power. On the other hand, the chiefs who had no legal jurisdiction at all, exercised every power of the highest courts of law. Dr. Adam Smith quotes an instance of this kind:—‘ It is not thirty years ago, since Mr. Cameron, of Lochail, a gentleman of Lochaber, in Scotland, without any legal warrant whatever, not being what was called a lord of regality, nor even a tenant in chief, but a vassal of the duke of Argyle’s, and without being so much as a justice of peace, used notwithstanding to exercise the highest criminal jurisdiction over his own people. He is said to have done so with great equity, though without any of the formalities of justice.’—*Wealth of Nations*, book iii. chap. 4.

[C.], page 35.

Extremely small possessions of land, while they keep the cultivation of the country in the hands of men incapable of attempting any improvement that requires expense, lead at the same time to an excessive want of œconomy in the most essential points.

In the Highlands we frequently see as many horses employed upon ten or twelve acres of land as might have been sufficient for the cultivation of thirty or forty. In the Agricultural Survey of the Northern Counties, p. 151, we are informed that “ in the parish of Far there are fifty ploughs; in that of Eddrachylyis only ten: and it is said that two good ploughs, constantly employed, might do the labour of the whole.”

In the Statistical Account of Scotland, vol. xiii.—parish of North Uist,—it is mentioned that the number of

horses kept in that parish and island amounts to 1600, though the black cattle are only 2000. The whole population is stated at 3218; and perhaps there is not any other part of the kingdom where the number of horses bears such a proportion to that of the human species as in some instances in the Highlands. By throwing several farms into one, the number of these expensive and unproductive animals is immediately reduced. Were there no other advantage than this, the occupier would be enabled to pay a higher rent in proportion to the extent of land. It cannot be denied that the change produces also a public benefit, inasmuch as in place of horses the land will be occupied by productive cattle which add to the food of man.

[D.], page 42.

In the Statistical Account of Scotland, vol. x. p. 366, —parish of Harris,—are some details concerning these different classes of occupiers of land; which may serve to illustrate the outline that has been given :—“ The whole
“ of this, like most other estates in the Hebrides, is
“ occupied by three different orders of tenants: 1st,
“ Principal tacksmen, or gentlemen; 2d, Small tenants;
“ 3d, Cotters. The common and antient computation
“ of lands in these countries is by pennies, of which the
“ subdivisions are halfpennies, farthings, half farthings,
“ elitigs, &c. Of these a gentleman, according to the
“ extent of his tack, possesses a vast many, perhaps
“ twenty pennies, perhaps many more. This reckon-
“ ing comprehends muir, pasture, and arable lands, for
“ which the tacksman pays so much yearly rent in the
“ lump during the currency of his lease. Of this ex-
“ tensive possession he may subset a third or a fourth.

“ Each sub-tenant in Harris generally holds the division of a farthing, for which he pays, according to the supposed value of the lands, from 20s. to 40s. in money, besides personal services, rated at a day’s labour *per week*, to the principal tacksman. The personal services of so many sub-tenants are reckoned indispensable under the present mode of management, in addition to the prodigious establishment besides of cotters and household servants, both male and female, which a gentleman supports in order to carry on the common business of the farm throughout the year. The single article of fuel costs a vast expense of labour. A gentleman, according to the number of fires his farm requires him to keep up, cuts of peats from thirty to fifty irons, and the cutting of an iron employs four men; the drying, stacking, and leading them home, require an expense of hands in proportion. Repairing of the feal-dykes and inclosures, (a work of perpetual labour,) weeding of corn, making of kelp, reaping of the different crops, hay, barley, oats, and potatoes, in harvest, and the laborious tillage for raising these crops in winter and spring; besides the thatching and repairing of houses, tending and herding the cattle, cows, horses, and sheep, separately, with a great variety of other processes in this complex system, all require such a multitude of servants that a stranger is naturally struck with astonishment, and wonders how the produce of the most lucrative farm is able to support the expense of so large an establishment of domestics.”

The small tenants are described p. 368.

“ A small tenant farm is a little commonwealth of villagers, whose houses or huts are huddled together with too little regard to form, order, or cleanliness,

“ and whose lands are yearly divided by lot for tillage,
“ while their cattle graze on the pastures in common.
“ The small tenants in this country, who hold immediately of the proprietor, have leases like the principal
“ tacksmen, and possess some a penny, some half a
“ penny, and some a farthing of lands.

“ The stock or *sooming* for the pasture of a farthing
“ land, is four milch cows, three, or perhaps four, horses,
“ with as many sheep on the common as the tenant has
“ luck to rear. The crops vary according to the different
“ qualities of the farms, but may be computed in
“ general at four or five bolls a farthing, for which the
“ tenant generally pays from 30s. to 40s. rent. This
“ might be reckoned good pennyworth of lands; but
“ when it is considered that the cattle of these tenants,
“ miserably fed throughout the year, and often dying
“ through mere want in the spring season, are neither
“ marketable nor yield much milk; besides that, their
“ crops are commonly insufficient to support their families
“ for half the year; the poverty of this class of
“ people, in general, is easily accounted for.” The
author goes on to state, that “ the produce of the small
“ farmer only supports his family from harvest until the
“ end of spring; and that he pays his rent, and subsists
“ during summer, by the manufacture of kelp and other
“ employments.”

The cotters are described p. 369.

“ The third class of the people, whom we have denominated
“ cotters, are tacksmen’s servants, constantly
“ employed in the labours of the farm. They have generally
“ grass, on the same pasture with their masters’
“ cattle, for one milch cow with its followers, *i. e.* a
“ three-year, a two-year, and one-year old, a working

“ horse and breeding mare, besides sheep, in the num-
 “ ber of which they are seldom restricted, and a far-
 “ thing’s division of land for corn and potatoes, with
 “ its proportion of sedware for manure. They have also
 “ a kail-yard, fuel, and a weekly allowance of a peck of
 “ meal. They are allowed a day in the week to work
 “ for themselves, which, with the help of their families,
 “ is sufficient for raising and repairing their crops. A
 “ grieve or overseer, and grass-keeper, if married men,
 “ and holding lands in lieu of wages, have more in pro-
 “ portion to the weight of the several charges committed
 “ to them. Having no rents to pay, and being seldom
 “ under the necessity of buying meal, unless the harvest
 “ prove very bad, they live, on the whole, better than
 “ the tenant of a farthing land.”

[E.], page 54.

It is observed in the Statistical Account of Scotland—
 that ‘ if a Highlander is forced or induced to leave the
 ‘ small circle which occupied his first affections, he cares
 ‘ not how far he goes from home. Going to another
 ‘ parish, or the district of another clan, is to him an en-
 ‘ tire banishment; and when he has resolved to set out,
 ‘ whether from necessity or choice, he would as soon
 ‘ cross the Atlantic as he would cross an arm of the sea.
 ‘ It is only an immediate and very clear advantage that
 ‘ would induce him to stop.’ * * * *Vol. iv. p. 574—*
parish of Struchur.

Of the truth of this observation I had myself a re-
 markable proof. Among the people engaged for my
 settlement in America were a few bound under indenture
 to a certain number of years service, and who at the end

of that time were to receive small lots of land. Not having a convenient opportunity of taking them out along with the other settlers, I found employment for them for some months on my estate in the south of Scotland. Some of my friends imagined that they might be induced to settle in that neighbourhood, and, though I was not sanguine as to the probable result, I did not wish to dissuade the attempt. Every reasonable encouragement was accordingly offered; but the most favourable answer that could be obtained was, that if the same quantity of land was to be given to them, and on the same terms as in America, they would *take the proposal into consideration.*

[F.], page 70.

“ When the 42d regiment was first raised, and particularly when the heirs of Ardkinglass and Strachur were appointed officers in lord Loudoun’s regiment in 1745, though it was not then the mode to make officers’ commissions depend upon raising a certain quota of men, yet the two young gentlemen got most of their company, who followed them as volunteers from their paternal estates. How different the sentiments of the people in 1778! When it was proposed to raise a West Fencible regiment, the gentlemen of Argyleshire engaged to furnish a certain number of men; but though they had an express promise from government that they should not be called out of the kingdom, not even into England, except in case of invasion, the heritors were obliged to bribe them high.”
 * * * *Statistical Account of Scotland, vol. iv. p. 574—parish of Strachur.*

[G.], page 76.

In Bacon's History of Henry VII. we find the following passage:—
‘ Inclosures at that time began to be more
‘ frequent, whereby arable land, which could not be
‘ manured without people and families, was turned into
‘ pasture, which was easily rid by a few herdsmen; and
‘ tenancies for years, lives, and at will, whereupon much
‘ of the yeomanry lived, were turned into demesnes.
‘ This bred a decay of people, and by consequence a
‘ decay of towns, churches, tythes, and the like. The
‘ king likewise knew full well and in nowise forgot,
‘ that there ensued withal upon this a decay and dimi-
‘ nution of subsidies and taxes; for the more gentlemen
‘ ever the lower books of subsidies. In remedying of
‘ this inconvenience, the king's wisdom was admirable,
‘ and the parliament's at that time. Inclosures they
‘ would not forbid, for that had been to forbid the im-
‘ provement of the patrimony of the kingdom; nor til-
‘ lage they would not compel, for that was to strive with
‘ nature and utility; but they took a course to take
‘ away depopulating inclosures and depopulating pas-
‘ turage, and yet not by that name, or by any imperious
‘ express prohibition, but by consequence. The or-
‘ dinance was, “ That all houses of husbandry that were
“ used with twenty acres of ground or upwards should
“ be maintained and kept for ever.”

In the preambles to several acts of parliament about that date, we find references to the same progress, *e. g.* 4th Henry VII. c. 16.

‘ Forasmuch as it is to the king our sovereign lord
‘ great surety and also to the surety of this realm of

‘ England, that the Isle of Wight, in the county of
‘ Southampton, be well inhabited with English people,
‘ for the defence as well of his antient enemies of the
‘ realm of France as of other parties, the which isle is
‘ lately decayed of people by reason that many towns
‘ and villages have been beaten down, and the fields
‘ ditched and made pastures for beasts and cattles; and
‘ also many dwelling places, fermes and fermholds, have
‘ of late times been used to be taken in one man’s hold
‘ and hands, that of old time were wont to be in many
‘ persons holds and hands, and many several households
‘ kept in them, and thereby much people multiplied,
‘ and the same isle well inhabited, the which now by
‘ the occasion aforesaid is desolate and not inhabited,
‘ but occupied with beasts and cattles, &c. &c.’ the
enactment is, that none shall take more fermes than one
in the Isle of Wight exceeding ten merks rent.

Another preamble not less remarkable is that of
25 Henry VIII. chap. 13:—‘ Forasmuch as divers and
‘ sundry persons of the king’s subjects of this realm, to
‘ whom God of his goodness hath disposed great plenty
‘ and abundance of moveable substance, now of late
‘ within few years have daily studied, practised, and in-
‘ vented ways and means how they might accumulate
‘ and gather together into few hands, as well great mul-
‘ titude of farms as great plenty of cattle, and in espe-
‘ cial sheep, putting such lands as they can get, to pas-
‘ ture, and not to tillage, whereby they have not only
‘ pulled down churches and towns, and enhanced the
‘ old rates of the rents of the possessions of this realm,
‘ or else brought it to such excessive fines that no poor
‘ man is able to meddle with it, but also have raised and
‘ enhanced the prices of all manner of corn, cattle, wool,



‘ pigs, geese, hens, chickens, eggs, and such other,
‘ almost double above the prices which have been ac-
‘ customed ; by reason whereof a marvellous multitude
‘ and number of the people of this realm be not able to
‘ provide meat, drink, and cloaths, necessary for them-
‘ selves, their wives, and children, but be so discour-
‘ aged with misery and poverty that they fall daily to
‘ theft, robbery, and other inconveniences, or pitifully die
‘ for hunger and cold ; and as it is thought by the king’s
‘ most humble and loving subjects, that one of the
‘ greatest occasions that moveth and provoketh those
‘ greedy and covetous people so to accumulate and keep
‘ in their hands such great portions and parts of the
‘ grounds and lands of this realm from the occupying
‘ of the poore husbandmen, and so to use it in pasture
‘ and not in tillage, is only the great profit that cometh
‘ of sheep, which now be come to a few persons hands
‘ of this realm, in respect of the whole number of the
‘ king’s subjects, that some have four-and-twenty thou-
‘ sand, some twenty thousand, some ten thousand, some
‘ six thousand, some five thousand, and some more and
‘ some less ; by the which a good sheep for victual that
‘ was accustomed to be sold for two shillings fourpence,
‘ or three shillings at the most, is now sold for six shil-
‘ lings or five shillings, or four shillings at the least ;
‘ and a stone of clothing wool, that in some shires in
‘ this realm was accustomed to be sold for eighteen-pence
‘ or twenty-pence, is now sold for four shillings, or
‘ three shillings fourpence at the least ; and in some
‘ countries where it hath been sold for two shillings
‘ four-pence or two shillings eight-pence, or three shil-
‘ lings at the most, it is now sold for five shillings, or
‘ four shillings eightpence the least, and so raised in

‘ every part of this realm; which things, thus used, be
 ‘ principally to the high displeasure of Almighty God,
 ‘ to the decay of the hospitality of this realm, to the di-
 ‘ minishing of the king’s people, and to the let of the
 ‘ cloth making, whereby many poor people have been
 ‘ accustomed to be set on work; and in conclusion, if
 ‘ remedy be not found, it may turn to the utter destruc-
 ‘ tion and desolation of this realm, which God defend.’

Hume, in his History of England, remarks that,
 ‘ during a century and a half after this period, there was
 ‘ a continual renewal of laws against depopulation,
 ‘ whence we may infer that none of them were ever
 ‘ executed. The natural course of improvement at last
 ‘ provided a remedy.’—*Vol. iii. p. 425. ed. 1763.*

Of the popular clamours on the subject, a curious spec-
 imen occurs in some lines, preserved in Lewis’s History
 of the English Translations of the Bible.

“ Before that sheepe so much dyd rayne,
 “ Where is one plough then was there twayne;
 “ Of corne and victual right greate plentye,
 “ And for one pennye egges twentye.
 “ I truste to God it will be redressed,
 “ That men by sheepe be not subpressed.
 “ Sheepe have eaten men full many a yere,
 “ Now let men eate sheepe and make good cheere.
 “ Those that have many sheepe in store
 “ They may repente it more and more,
 “ Seynge the greate extreme necessitee,
 “ And yet they shewe no more charitee.”

These ideas appear to have had no less a sanction than
 that of Sir Thomas More.—In a dialogue on the causes of
 the prevalence of crimes in England, which he introduces

in the first book of Utopia, he expresses himself as follows :

‘ Your sheep that were wont to be so meek and tame,
‘ and so small eaters, now, as I hear say, be become so
‘ great devourers and so wild, that they eat up and swal-
‘ low down the very men themselves. They consume,
‘ destroy, and devour whole fields, houses, and cities.
‘ For look in what part of the realm doth grow the finest,
‘ and therefore dearest wool, there noblemen and gen-
‘ tlemen, yea and certain abbotts, holy men no doubt,
‘ not contenting themselves with the yearly revenues and
‘ profits, that were wont to grow to their forefathers and
‘ predecessors of their lands, not being content that they
‘ live in rest and pleasure nothing profiting, yea much
‘ knowing the weale publique: leave no ground for
‘ tillage: they enclose all into pastures: they throw
‘ down houses: they pluck down towns, and leave
‘ nothing standing, but only the church to be made a
‘ sheep house. And as tho’ you lost no small quantity
‘ of ground by forests, chases, lands, and parks, those
‘ good holy men turn all dwelling places, and all glebe
‘ land into desolation, and wilderness.—Therefore that
‘ one covetous and unsatiable cormorant and very plague
‘ of his native country, may compass about and enclose
‘ many thousand acres of ground together within one
‘ pale or hedge, the husbandmen be thrust out of their
‘ own, or else either by covine and fraud, or by violent
‘ oppression they be put besides it, or by wrongs and
‘ injuries they be so wearied, that they be compelled to
‘ sell all: by one means therefore or by other, either by
‘ hook or crook they must needs depart away, poor silly
‘ wretched souls, men, women, husbands, wives, fa-
‘ therless children, widows, woful mothers, with their

‘ young babes, and their whole household, small in substance, and much in number, as husbandry requireth many hands.

‘ Away they trudge, I say, out of their known and accustomed houses, finding no place to rest in. All their household stuff, which is very little worth, tho’ it might well abide the sale: yet being suddenly thrust out, they be constrained to sell it for a thing of nought. And when they have wandered abroad till that be spent, what can they then else do but steal, and then justly perhaps be hanged, or else go about a begging? And yet then also they be cast in prison as vagabonds, because they go about and work not: whom no man will set at work, tho’ they never so willingly profer themselves thereto. For one shepherd or herdsman is enough to eat up that ground with cattle, to the occupying whereof about husbandry many hands were requisite. And this is also the cause why victuals be now in many places dearer. Yea besides this the price of wool is so risen, that poor folks, which were wont to work it, and make cloth thereof, be now able to buy none at all. And by this means very many be forced to forsake work and to give themselves to idleness.’

From these observations of so great a man, combined with the testimony conveyed in the preamble to the act of 25 Henry VIIIth, no doubt can be entertained, that in England the change from the feudal to the commercial system was accompanied by an unusual prevalence of crimes: nor is this difficult to be explained. Men educated amidst the idleness and irregularities of the feudal times, could not at once acquire the habits of industrious workmen; and nothing is more probable than that

on being deprived of their accustomed means of support, they should seek relief in criminal practices. Perhaps this effect might have been alleviated, if such a vent as emigration affords had then been open to people of this description.

[H.], *page 78.*

The fact is perhaps even stronger than is here stated.

There is no part of the Highlands where the change in the system of management has advanced so far towards maturity as in Argyllshire. In Dr. John Smith's Survey of that County, drawn up for the Board of Agriculture, we find this remark :

'The state of population in this county, as it stood in 1755, and as it stands at present, may be seen in the statistical table. Although many parishes have greatly decreased in their number of inhabitants, owing to the prevalence of the sheep system, yet upon the whole the number is greater now than it was forty years ago. This is owing to the greater population of the town of Campbleton and village of Oban, which have more than doubled their joint numbers in that period ; so that, if these are left out of the reckoning, the population in the county will be found to have decreased considerably.' * * * *p. 291.*

This fact is curious and valuable : the population of Argyllshire has not diminished on the whole, yet the value of produce which is now sent away to feed the inhabitants of a distant part of the kingdom, is much greater than formerly. Independently of that circumstance, this fact throws light on the nature of the change which has taken place by the abolition of the feudal system, and on the source of the fallacy which has been

prevalent on the subject of population. The diminution in the *country* is evident to the most inattentive eye; no one can avoid seeing ruinous cottages and decayed villages: but the increase in the *towns* is not so obvious. This effect, though simultaneous, often takes place in a distant situation, where it can be traced only by careful enumerations.

According to the advancement of commerce, we find in every country a greater proportion of the whole population collected in towns. This indeed is an effect which in a moral point of view may justly excite feelings of regret; but it seems so unavoidable a consequence, that we ought to consider it as the price which is paid by society for the blessings of civilization and regular government.

[I.], page 79.

Dr. Smith, in his Survey of Argyllshire, drawn up for the Board of Agriculture, complains much of the effect of sheep-farming on population: at the same time he acknowledges its superior productiveness. ‘That our mountains (he says) are better adapted for sheep than for black cattle, cannot admit of a doubt. Under the sheep system they make a much better return both to farmer and to the landlord, and furnish in the wool of the sheep a large fund for manufacture and for commerce.’—p. 260.

Mr. Irvine, speaking of the new grazing system, says, ‘till this system was adopted, our hills were little better than useless wastes to the owners and the public.’—*Inquiry into the Causes and Effects of Emigration*, p. 34.

The fact is distinctly explained in an Essay on the

Improvement of the Highlands, by the Rev. James Headrick.—‘ There are physical reasons which render
 ‘ black cattle an improper stock upon high mountains.
 ‘ In such situations they are always exposed to danger, and
 ‘ are seldom able to collect above one third of the herbage
 ‘ which could be gathered by sheep. * * * * *
 ‘ As the extent of mountainous pasturage far exceeds
 ‘ that of the arable land in the valleys, cattle in such
 ‘ situations cannot be properly foddered and taken care
 ‘ of in winter, of course great numbers die of hunger,
 ‘ while the survivors are very much diminished in value.’
Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society,
vol. ii. p. 455.

The same opinion is strongly expressed in the Agricultural Survey of the Northern Counties, p. 110.—‘ For
 ‘ every pound of beef that a Highlander can send to market, a shepherd can at least bring three pounds of
 ‘ mutton. This is besides the wool, which furnishes the
 ‘ staple for an useful manufacture that never existed before. Hence the shepherd is enabled to pay at once a
 ‘ double rent with ease; and it can hardly be questioned
 ‘ that in process of time Highland property would be
 ‘ tripled or quadrupled in value by sheep-farming.’

Mr. Marshall, in his Survey of the Central Highlands, speaks of the increase of produce as so vast that he entertains a doubt whether a market can be found for it :—
 ‘ Where could be found a market for such a number of
 ‘ sheep as the entire Highlands would produce? Hitherto
 ‘ the demand has been greater than the produce, and
 ‘ must continue to be so, until the country be stocked.
 ‘ Young sheep now travel northward from the central
 ‘ Highlands, and from the south of Scotland; but
 ‘ whenever the rage of stocking ceases, though it may

‘happen before the entire Highlands be completely stocked, sheep of every age and sex will, in the ordinary course of things, return in myriads, and overflow the central and southern markets; and unless some new market could be opened in England (a thing which under the present spirit of breeding sheep there is not likely to happen), the Highlands would be under the necessity of returning to the corn and cattle system.’
* * * *p.* 56.

If, however, this very intelligent agriculturist had bestowed as much of his attention on Political as on Rural Economy, he could scarcely have failed to perceive, that the present spirit of breeding sheep in England will be no absolute bar to the sheep of the Highlands finding a market there. There is no other management which in these mountains will bear a comparison with the rearing of sheep; and therefore, if the farmer cannot otherwise dispose of his produce, he must reduce his price, till he forces a market. The price will be very far reduced indeed before sheep-farming sinks to the level of the old management of the Highlands in point of profit.—The farmer who breeds sheep on the arable lands of England is in a very different situation: he can employ his land for many other purposes with nearly equal advantage. Independently of breaking it up for tillage, he may apply his pasture to the dairy, to fattening cattle, or even to feeding these very sheep from the Highlands. Nevertheless, therefore, the price of young sheep falls below a certain level, he will give up breeding them as an unprofitable business; and if the sheep which can be reared in the mountainous districts of the kingdom are found adequate to the full supply of the market, the practice

of breeding them on fertile arable lands, however fashionable it may now be, must decline and fall into disuse.—At all events the progress of sheep-farming in the Highlands must tend to the diminution of this practice; and of the lands which will thereby fall to be converted to a different purpose, it is reasonable to suppose that a great proportion at least will be employed for the cultivation of grain.

[K.], page 83. 105.

Having communicated these observations while in the press to an eminent merchant and manufacturer at Glasgow, a man of distinguished judgment and information, and intimately acquainted with the Highlands, I was favoured with the following remarks:

‘ You are quite correct in what you say about finding employment for the Highlanders in the manufacturing towns. We have had a good deal of experience upon that part of your statement at our mills at *****, where we weave as well as spin.—We have at different times, when wanting hands, recruited from the Isle of Mull, and brought to **** many families from thence, but we scarcely ever derived benefit but from the children: the grown up people (for want of early associations, I suppose,) seeming almost to be without a capacity of acquiring dexterity in the very common operations.’

‘ What you say upon the introduction of manufactures into the Highlands is unanswerable: they possess no advantages to induce the attempt.—The only manufacture that ever occurred to me as naturally connected with the Highlands, was to prepare and

‘ spin up the wool from their own sheep, something of
‘ which I believe is already done at Bunaw in Argyll-
‘ shire, and the yarn sold in the clothing counties in
‘ England.’

[L.], page 80.

On this point I have received some very valuable observations from a most respectable proprietor resident in the Western Isles, whose name, if I were at liberty to mention it, would leave no doubt of their accuracy:—
‘ I have always looked upon the indolence attributed to
‘ the Highlanders as proceeding in a very great measure, from the misplaced attachment of friends and
‘ relations, and even the native spirit of hospitality, in
‘ this respect too general amongst the lower orders. It
‘ is a common practice for people to go to service in the
‘ Low Country for several years; but they almost uniformly return, and are often sent for by their friends,
‘ to remain idle at home, when tired, as they say, of
‘ work. Those friends have frequently but a scanty subsistence for themselves, but no one will refuse a residence or a share of his homely fare to a friend or
‘ connection. They frequently (unknown) share their
‘ little portions of land, so that no one dreads the danger of absolute want, however idle; and thus a great
‘ spur to industry is withdrawn. From this cause it proceeds, that no Highlander can be got to be sufficiently
‘ industrious, or to work hard in his own country.’

[M.], page 86.

Of this fact we have, among many other proofs, a strong testimony from Mr. Irvine.—‘ In some val-

‘leys the population is so excessive, that it is a question
 ‘with many discerning people, how the one half of the
 ‘inhabitants could subsist, though they should have the
 ‘land for nothing. Those who would be tenants are so
 ‘numerous, and the land fit for cultivation so scanty,
 ‘that all cannot be satisfied. The disappointed person,
 ‘feeling himself injured, condemns the landlord, and
 ‘seeks a happy relief in America. The tradesmen are
 ‘in the same predicament; they cannot be all equally
 ‘well employed, because they are not all equally de-
 ‘serving; because there are too many of them, and be-
 ‘cause customers are too few. They curse their country,
 ‘and make haste to abandon it.’

‘In some spots with which I am acquainted, there
 ‘may be from ten to twelve inhabitants, in some places
 ‘more, to an acre of arable land. Most of them have
 ‘no trade. They apparently live by the produce of the
 ‘place; and making every allowance for the scantiness
 ‘of the fare, their patience of hunger, and trifling im-
 ‘portation of necessaries, it is to me inexplicable how
 ‘they subsist. To equipoise population they spread
 ‘themselves begging.’ * * * *Inquiry into the Causes
 and Effects of Emigration, p. 7.*

With all this the reverend author is an enemy to emi-
 gration; and this too is the country which, according to
 the Highland Society, “is fast approaching to the point
 “of complete depopulation!”—See *Third Report on
 Emigration, p. 1 and 2.*

[N.], page 92.

The following description of the situation of the
Mailers is extracted from the Survey of the Northern

Counties drawn up for the Board of Agriculture, p. 56. and with slight variations may be applied to the class of people who improve waste land in all parts of the Highlands.

‘ In the Black Isle we have numbers of this description of cultivators, by whose exertions many considerable acquisitions of arable land have been gained from our barren wastes and moors, in addition to different properties in this district. They generally follow some handicraft employment, such as weaver, shoemaker, taylor, carpenter, mason, dyker, &c. &c. and many are mere day labourers only. These poor people are often indiscriminately planted on the skirts of waste or moor lands, next adjoining to those last cultivated, and now we shall suppose in the hands of a farmer or tenant. After his house is erected for the Mailer, he is left at freedom to dig away and cultivate what ground he can, for there is rarely occasion to limit him. The aids afforded him, and terms granted, are various, and generally, I suppose, proportioned to the expectations from his exertions.’

‘ I find that some give seven years’ lease gratis, wood for his house, and some other pecuniary allowances. At the expiration of the lease, a small acknowledgment is imposed, and perhaps not, for three or four years more, as his industry deserves.’

‘ Some assign them one, two, or three acres, and never remove them, on paying, viz. the men 10s. and widows 5s. per ann. and giving 15 days service in harvest; but, however, paying 6d. per day to the men, and 4d. to the women and all others able to work, a little drink, but no victuals.’

‘ Some with seven years’ lease, rent free at first, give

‘ them labouring utensils, and also seed for the first three
‘ years; and some give a life rent, and wood for their
‘ houses, on paying 1s. per annum, but must yearly
‘ take in two acres. Day services in harvest, and some
‘ other trifling exactions, may possibly be stipulated for
‘ by all. The only means the Mailer has for cultivation
‘ are, his own and family personal labour with the spade,
‘ his ashes, and the dung from his miserable animal of a
‘ horse, which he keeps for the purpose of bringing
‘ home his turf for fuel: and he generally commences
‘ with potatoes: when he thrives he possibly acquires
‘ two horses, a few sheep, and perhaps a hog.’



‘ I find that there are advocates for and against this
‘ practice. The general objections to these settlers are,
‘ that they are great depredators, are in declared hostility
‘ to all inclosures and improvements of any higher na-
‘ ture than their own, and unmerciful destroyers of all
‘ the grounds around them, scalping and tearing up
‘ every bit of better soil, and digging holes and pits either
‘ for their turf, or procuring earth or gravel for their
‘ dung-heaps; and this to such a degree, that when re-
‘ moved, no farmer can meddle with such abused and
‘ ill-conditioned lands: also the small and tedious pro-
‘ gress they make, and their natural indolence and in-
‘ efficiency. On the other hand, there are those who
‘ think this mode of improvement sure, tho’ very slow
‘ and tedious: that they are the only means within the
‘ reach of many proprietors, and not rejected even by
‘ those who might adopt a higher and more effectual
‘ system, and both have already experienced their good
‘ effects in the increase of their rent rolls. Almost all
‘ acknowledge the accommodation derived from the
‘ assistance of their services, at a certain easy rate, in

‘ harvest and other husbandry-work ; and particularly
 ‘ here where day labourers are not otherwise to be pro-
 ‘ cured.’

[O.], page 96.

‘ The landlord enlarges his farms to make way for a
 ‘ mode of agriculture or pasturage, which he conceives
 ‘ more advantageous. He removes the former occu-
 ‘ pants, and admits a person of more understanding,
 ‘ and more efficient capital: he makes a provision for
 ‘ those who may be dispossessed, by offering them a
 ‘ small tenement ; but pride and irritation scorn to ac-
 ‘ cept his provision.’ * * * * *

‘ Where it is found more profitable to lay a district
 ‘ under grass to the half or two-thirds of its extent,
 ‘ it is obvious, that unless you make a previous provi-
 ‘ sion of some kind, many must leave their country to
 ‘ seek food and employment in some other place. In
 ‘ this case, one of the most improveable farms should
 ‘ be divided into crofts or fields of one or three acres ;
 ‘ and a judicious selection should be made of those to
 ‘ whom they should be offered ; for some men, who
 ‘ pride themselves upon being men of spirit, would
 ‘ spurn at the thought of descending from the rank of
 ‘ a tenant into the station of a crofter. If a man of
 ‘ this kind, however, refuses any rational accommoda-
 ‘ tion, the country is better without him ; he is ripe for
 ‘ emigration. He may be cured by changing his resi-
 ‘ dence. His spirit is not sound. This is the touch-
 ‘ stone.’ * * * * * *Inquiry into the Causes and Effects*
of Emigration, by the Rev. A. Irvine, p. 34 and 104.

These expressions are rather too severe to be applied
 to a feeling so natural and so universal among mankind.

The desire of bettering our condition, the reluctance and mortification that is felt at any retrograde step, seem to be almost inseparable from the human mind. They may be traced in every rank of society: the greatest monarch on earth is not exempt from their influence, nor is the meanest peasant. If these feelings meet with indulgence in one rank, ought they to be censured with so much rigour in another?—We do not think it extraordinary that a gentleman of large property should be averse to sink into the station of a farmer or a shopkeeper: the reverend author himself would not, perhaps, be well satisfied if he were reduced to the condition of a small tenant: and is the tenant to be blamed because he too clings to the small degree of rank he possesses, and will not submit to sink in the scale of society without an effort to maintain his station?

In this passage Mr. Irvine has perhaps been influenced by a glimpse of the arguments which are insisted on in page 117 *et seq.* of these Observations; and by this he has been led to a practical conclusion more just than the general tendency of his work can be deemed. He certainly cannot be accused of being a friend to emigration; yet if the gentlemen of the Highlands agree with him in the sentiment that the country is better without those whose “*spirit*,” as he describes it, “*is not sound*,” they will not find many among the emigrants to excite their regret.

[P.], page 97.

Innumerable authorities might be quoted for this fact: the following may be sufficient:

‘ No two occupations can be more incompatible than

' farming and fishing; as the seasons which require un-
 ' divided exertion in fishing, are precisely those in which
 ' the greatest attention should be devoted to agriculture.
 ' Grazing, which is less incompatible with fishing than
 ' agriculture, is even found to distract the attention and
 ' prevent success in either occupation. This is demon-
 ' strated by the very different success of those who unite
 ' both occupations, from those who devote themselves
 ' exclusively to fishing. Indeed, the industrious fisher
 ' finds the whole season barely sufficient for the labours
 ' of his proper occupation. From the middle of spring
 ' the fishing season continues frequently till after Christ-
 ' mas, and the intervening space is barely sufficient for
 ' refitting his nets, lines, and fishing tackle. But the
 ' population of the coasts of the Highlands is sufficient
 ' to admit of the professions being separated, which
 ' only injure each other when conjoined.'—*Essay on*
the Fisheries, by Mr. R. Melvill, at Ullapool, in Ross-
shire.—Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland
Society, vol. ii. p. 413.

[Q.], page 93.

' From the æra of introducing sheep-stocks, a very
 ' great change is observable in the dispositions of the
 ' people. Till then they showed no predilection for a
 ' seafaring life.' * * * * *

' Within these last thirty years, especially since sheep
 ' stocks have been introduced, it is remarked that a
 ' number of people from this district have become
 ' sailors: but it appears that necessity, not choice, has
 ' been the cause.'—*Statistical Account of Scotland,*

vol. iv. p. 574 and 575—parish of Strachur, in Argyllshire.

[R.], page 133.

In reasoning on this subject I have taken for granted that, according to the received ideas, there is a difference arising from the accumulation of people in the Highlands, and that the expense of making kelp would be greater if the population should fall to its natural level. In this, however, I must be understood as speaking hypothetically; for I am by no means convinced, that those who have work to be executed in the Highlands derive any real benefit from the present low rate of wages. The same circumstances, from which this arises, occasion also a want of industry and skill, which is probably more than sufficient to counterbalance the advantage.

In several parts of the Highlands I have found that when labour was done by the piece, the prices given were higher than would have been required for similar work on my own estate; yet in the same places the wages of a yearly servant were scarcely more than half of those which an ordinary workman would have procured in the south of Scotland.

With respect to kelp-making, it is difficult to state so direct a comparison. The shores of the south of Scotland are seldom so productive as to render kelp an object of general attention, or to lead to those improved methods of manufacture which will naturally arise where the quantity is very considerable. The plan upon which the workmen are employed and paid is different in different places; and even where the same mode is followed, little instruction can be gained from a mere com-

parison of prices, because the labour required for making any specified quantity of kelp is various, according as the situation is more or less difficult. A comparison in which so many complicated circumstances are involved, would require a more minute acquaintance with the business than I can pretend to; but I may venture to state some grounds for suspecting that there is much fallacy in the ideas commonly entertained on the subject.

A very intelligent overseer of work in the south of Scotland, who has had much experience in kelp-making, and is not unacquainted with the Hebrides, informs me that in situations not less difficult than most of the shores he has seen there, he could in a good season make five and a half tons of kelp, and in the worst season four tons, for each workman employed under him. This I apprehend is considerably more than is generally done on the coast of the Highlands and Western Isles: at least in those parts I have visited I have not heard of so great a quantity being *usually* done.—In the Statistical Account of Scotland, vol. x. parish of Harris, it is mentioned that one ton is the proportion commonly allotted to each working hand.—In the account of North and South Uist, this point is not so fully stated; but circumstances are mentioned which give reason to believe that the proportion cannot in general exceed two ton.

It is also mentioned in the same work, that the land rent of these islands is entirely paid away in wages for kelp-making; and I have heard the same circumstance reported from other authorities.—From the description of these islands it appears, that on their western coast there is a uniform range of arable land naturally of a fine quality, though from the miserable style of agriculture not

so productive as it ought to be. In the island of South Uist, the extent of good land, though not accurately surveyed, seems to be at least thirty square miles, besides ten or twelve times as much of moorish pasture, partly improvable. Were this land well managed, and let at its fair value, it cannot appear improbable that the rent would exceed considerably the whole price of the eleven hundred tons of kelp which the shores are reckoned to produce: but when the use of all this land is given away for the mere expense of manufacture, at what rate is an acre to be valued, if this be an œconomical mode of management: or where is the profit the landlord derives from his kelp?



The expenses of making kelp in the western Highlands and isles are in various situations from thirty-five to fifty shillings per ton: in some few instances as high as three pounds. Where local circumstances are similar, I do not apprehend the expenses in the low country of Scotland are much, if at all, higher.—On inquiring of the same man I have mentioned above, at what rate he could undertake to make kelp in those parts of the Hebrides he was acquainted with, on the supposition that he could have no assistance from the inhabitants, and that all his workmen must be hired in other parts of the country, and conveyed there for the season, he formed an estimate of prices not very widely different from those that are at present paid.

Though I am far from supposing that the natural progress of things in the Highlands will ever render such expedients necessary, yet this may be sufficient to show how little foundation there is for the idea, that the manufacture of kelp may be totally annihilated by emigration.

[S.], *page* 138.

See First Report to the Highland Society, on Emigration, p. 5. (N.B. The entire MS. contains 16.)

‘ It may easily be supposed, that of those who make
‘ the fatal experiment, the few among the survivors who
‘ are capable of relating the fatal tale, find it impossible
‘ to warn their friends at home of the discovery they
‘ make, while surrounded by none but those whose interest it is to keep up the delusion. There is an anecdote for the truth of which the committee cannot
‘ pledge themselves, but which is generally believed in
‘ that part of the country where it is said to have happened, which is very applicable to this point. It is
‘ related of a sagacious Highlander who had emigrated,
‘ that being desirous to warn his friends of their danger,
‘ and yet aware of the impossibility of doing it in plain
‘ language, the consequence of which would only have
‘ been the detention of his letter, he wrote a letter
‘ glossing over the hardships of his voyage, and advising
‘ his friends to follow him, but with one caution, that
‘ they should persuade his *uncle James* to accompany
‘ them, without which he would not recommend the
‘ measure. His friends who received this letter knew
‘ that his uncle James had been dead before he left
‘ home, and understood perfectly his hint against undertaking such a voyage.’

It may not be amiss to compare this passage with the opinion of a clergyman resident in the centre of the Highlands. “ I am persuaded there is not a family,
“ hardly an individual, who has not a father, brother,
“ sister, cousin, or kinsman, in America, with whom

“ they keep up a regular correspondence.” *Irvine’s Inquiry into the Causes and Effects of Emigration*, p. 66.

[T.], page 134. 140.

See Third Report of the Highland Society on Emigration,—page 4 & seq. (*the whole M.S. containing 13 pages.*)

The long detail of uninteresting circumstances contained in the Report would be tedious if extracted at full length, and a short summary of the material points will render them sufficiently intelligible.

The ground of the whole is a complaint which is stated to have been made by some tenants in Benbecula to the justices of the peace, against two men of the names of M^c Lean and M^c Lellan, whom they accused of having enticed them to sign agreements for going to America, of the import of which they were not aware.

It must be observed, by the way, that allegations of this kind are very frequently made by the common Highlanders without any foundation. All written transactions are in the English language, which is understood only by a small proportion of the people; and any one who repents of a bargain he has made, has so obvious an excuse in this pretence, that it ought always to be received with some degree of jealousy. On this occasion, however, the justices seem to have been perfectly well disposed to believe the tenants on their word.

It is further mentioned that M^c Lean and M^c Lellan had conversed with the people assembled at a place of religious worship about America, and among other observations had said, that “ they were not troubled with

“landlords or factors*, but that all the people were
 “happy, and on an equal footing, and that there were
 “no rents paid there.” One of them also read a letter
 from a settler in Canada, exhorting his countrymen “to
 “throw off the yoke of bondage and the shackles of
 “slavery, and to quit the land of Egypt and come to
 “this land of Canaan:” adding, “How can I say
 “otherwise when I never knew what actual freedom or
 “the spirit of equality was till I came to Canada? We
 “have wholesome laws and impartial judges; we have
 “the blessings of the gospel, and peace in the midst of
 “plenty.—Here are no landlord, no factor, no threaten-
 “ing for your rents at Martinmas.”

“Such appears then,” says the Reporter, “to be the
 “train of sentiments, such the deceitful hopes, and
 “*seditions* discontents, which the emigrant traders make
 “a liberal use of.”—He goes on to comment on the cir-
 cumstances above noticed, and to observe that “when
 “this traffic draws into its service the preaching of sedi-
 “tion, and *even* the *calumniating* landlords, *factors*,
 “and still more the magistracy of the country, in such
 “a way as to irritate the people, and thereby put the
 “public peace in hazard, there is at common law, full
 “power vested in the magistrate to restrain and punish
 “such irregularities.”

Those who will not take the trouble of investigating
 the real origin and effective causes of any evil they ob-
 serve, are generally inclined to cut the Gordian knot by
 some such short hand remedy as this gentleman hints at.
 A more accurate examination would have shown him,
 that the circumstances on which he insists as the prime

* i e land-stewards.

causes of the disorders of the country are the mere symptoms of its morbid state. However mistaken on this head, the reporter has given us facts that are important, as an example of that irritation which has been already insisted on, as prevalent among the lower orders in the Highlands, in consequence of the change in the system of the country.

It cannot escape notice, that the language of M^c Lean and M^c Lellan, however objectionable, derived all its force from the previous existence of discontent in the minds of the people whom they addressed. If the same language had been used in the days of genuine clanship, how differently would the people have received the idea of going to a country, where they could have no protection from the chief!—The topics of complaint brought forward, are all founded on the peculiar circumstances of the Highlands, and totally different from those which a preacher of sedition in any other part of the kingdom would have dwelt upon. Not a word is said of the Government or Laws of the kingdom; nothing is spoken of but the harshness of the landlord, and the unusual burthen of rents.

The praises bestowed on the government and judicature in Canada, may seem indeed to imply a censure on that of our own country; but this would not be a fair construction, when we consider how little the advantages of the British constitution have yet reached to these people.—This may not be understood by those who are accustomed to the regular administration of justice in all the southern parts of the kingdom, and who imagine that things are every where conducted in the same manner.—The law, indeed, is the same as in the rest of Scotland; the heritable jurisdictions are abolished:—

nevertheless, the circumstances of the Highlands still give the proprietors of land a degree of power over their immediate dependants, which is not seen in the more commercial parts of the kingdom.—This cannot be said equally of *all* the Highlands; for, in the southern and more improved districts, things are approaching to a similarity with the rest of Scotland; but in remoter situations there is still a considerable remnant of the arbitrary spirit of the feudal times.

From the observations that have been made on the general state of society in the Highlands, it will be understood that no man can live there as an independent labourer; that every inhabitant of the country is under an absolute necessity of obtaining a possession of land; and as the competitors for such possessions are so numerous that all cannot be accommodated, every one, who is not determined on quitting the country, feels himself very much at the mercy of the proprietor, on whom he depends for the means of remaining. To this is to be added the poverty of the lower orders; the great extent of particular estates; the remote insulated situation of many; their distance from the ordinary courts of justice, and the great expense which must on that account be incurred by an attempt to procure redress for any wrong.—All these circumstances combine to give a landlord in these remote situations an extraordinary degree of personal weight; and the regular authority of a magistrate being superadded, no individual among his dependants can venture to contest his power.

The laws passed after the year 1745, for abolishing the feudal jurisdictions in the Highlands, were certainly useful in so far as they had an effect, but were of much less consequence than they have sometimes been supposed.

The substantial change on the state of the Highlands has arisen from other circumstances already sufficiently explained. To extend the spirit as well as the forms of the British constitution through these remote districts, it is necessary that the progress which has been going on, ever since the year 1745, should come to maturity; that a commercial order of society should be fully established, and complete the subversion of the feudal system.



In the present state of things, it is not perhaps too much to say, that in a great part of the Highlands the proper administration of justice still depends less on the regular checks of law, than on the personal character of the resident gentry. The power that is in their hands is in a great proportion of the country exercised with a degree of moderation and equity highly honourable to individual gentlemen; but unless the proprietors of the Highlands were a race of angels, this could not be without exceptions.—Above all, when it is considered that many extensive estates are scarcely visited by their owners once in the course of several years, and that the almost despotic authority of the landlord is transferred to the hands of underlings, who have no permanent interest in the welfare of the people, it is not to be supposed that abuses will not prevail, and that oppressions will not be practised.

The complaints of the common people are in many parts as loud as they dare to utter them; but the instances of injustice which they may occasionally experience, produce on their minds an aggravated impression, from the great and constant sources of irritation arising out of the general state of the country; and hence perhaps their complaints are too indiscriminate.

That there is some ground, however, for complaint, does not rest on the authority of the common people alone. In Knox's Tour through the Highlands, p. 191. we find the following remark on one of the Hebrides:—
“ The fishery of the island has long been monopolized
“ by the factor, who pays the fishermen thirteen pounds
“ per ton for the ling, and gets, when sold on the spot,
“ eighteen. When to these advantages we add the various
“ emoluments arising from his office, and his traffic
“ in grain, meal, cattle, &c. his place is better than the
“ rent of many considerable estates in the Highlands.”

It may perhaps be imagined that Mr. Knox, being a stranger, has been misled by exaggerated representations; but this cannot be supposed of the patriotic author of the Agricultural Survey of the Northern Counties of Scotland, who, in laying down a plan for the management of a Highland estate, particularly insists on the factors being “ restrained from exacting services, accepting presents, or dealing as drovers in the purchase of
“ cattle, under any pretence whatever.” p. 166.

Of the prevalence of abuses we have also the testimony of a resident clergyman, Mr. Irvine, in his Inquiry into the Causes and Effects of Emigration.

“ Were it consistent,” he says, “ with my inquiry,
“ I would willingly pass over the conduct of the factors
“ in silence.” p. 41.

“ If a person is so unfortunate as to give any one of
“ them offence, no matter how, he either privately or
“ publicly uses every artifice to render him odious to his
“ neighbours or his landlord, till in the end he finds it
“ necessary to withdraw.

“ It would be tedious and irksome to enumerate the
“ various methods by which a factor may get rid of a

“ person whom he hates, or let in (as it is termed) one
“ whom he loves.” *p.* 42.

Mr. Irvine goes on with various other observations,
and concludes with saying:—“ He that could bear the
“ tyranny of such masters, might have been born a
“ Mahometan.” *p.* 45.

The power with which the factors of many Highland
estates are invested, seems to carry with it temptations
almost too great for human nature: but though it is on
this class of men that the weight of popular odium chiefly
falls, ought not the blame in just reason to lie with
those, who suffer such abuses to be committed in their
name?

Taking things, however, as we find them, it will not
appear extraordinary that the crime, newly laid down
in the *code* of the Highland Society under the title of
calumniating factors, unknown as it is in the laws of
England, should in some places be deemed the most dan-
gerous and unpardonable of all species of sedition.

